

THE VIOLET BOOK





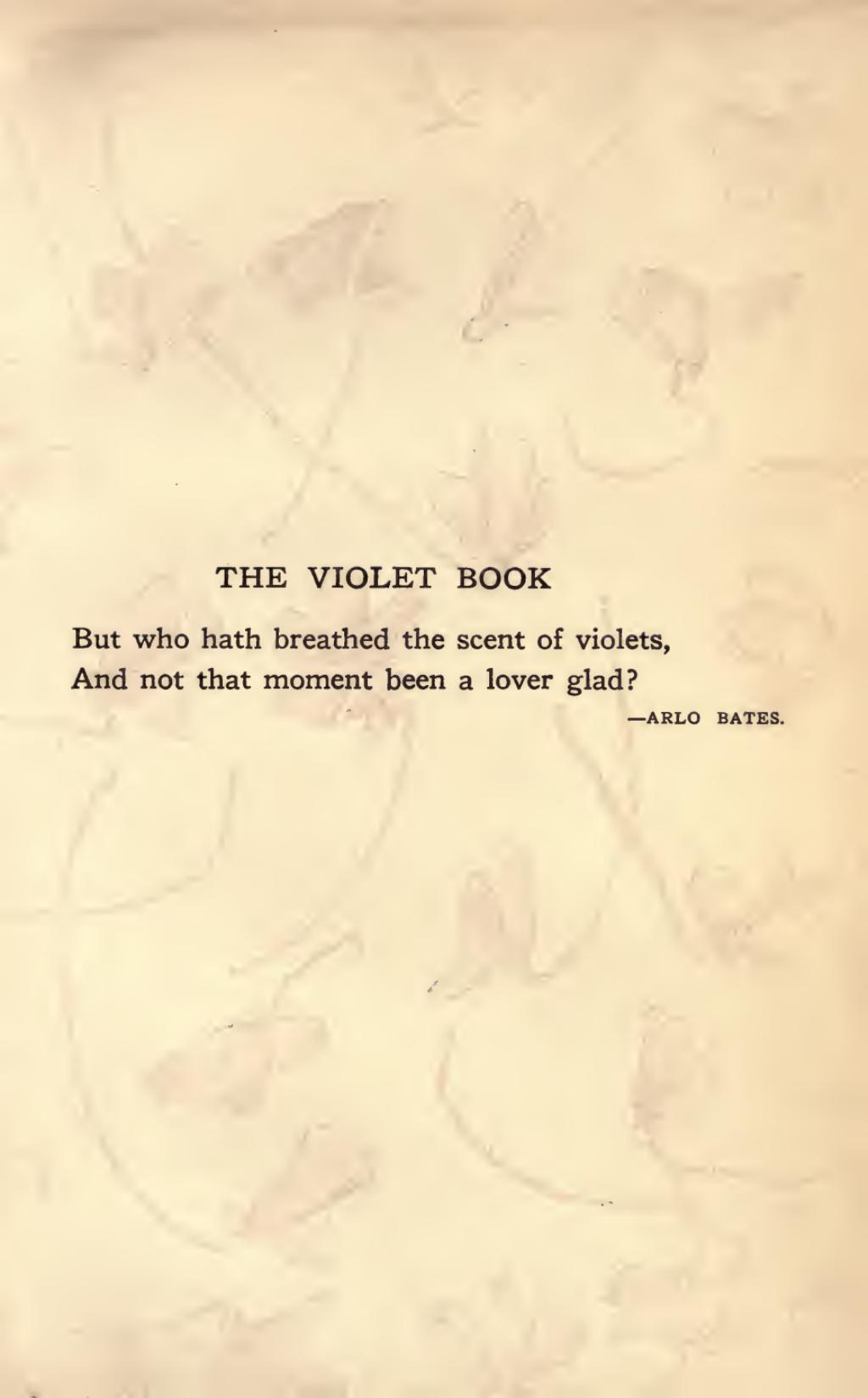
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THE VIOLET BOOK

But who hath breathed the scent of violets,
And not that moment been a lover glad?

—ARLO BATES.





*Go, modest little violets, and lie upon her breast ;
Your eyes will tell her something—perhaps she'll guess the rest !*

THE VIOLET BOOK

Arranged by
WILLIS BOYD ALLEN

"Such a starved bank of moss,
Till, that May morn,
Blue ran the flash across:
Violets were born."

Browning



PHILADELPHIA
GEORGE W. JACOBS & CO.
PUBLISHERS



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Published September, 1909

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TO HER

For whom this little company of her sisters
was first gathered

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PREFACE

Many of the selections in this volume are waifs and strays, found in obscure periodicals and newspapers, or in long-forgotten books on the dusty shelves of libraries. Some of them have been gathered from copyrighted works, and for the use of these the compiler owes and renders his best thanks.

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The Houghton, Mifflin Company, for selections from the poems of John Greenleaf Whittier, Edith M. Thomas, Celia Thaxter, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Richard Watson Gilder, John Hay, Lucy Larcom, George E. Woodbury, Alice and Phœbe Cary, Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Russell Lowell,

PREFACE

Bayard Taylor, Harriet Prescott Spofford, Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney, and Edmund Clarence Stedman; Messrs. Little, Brown and Company, for lines by Louise Chandler Moulton and Helen Hunt Jackson; Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, for selections from the works of Dora Read Goodale and Myrtle Reed; Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, for extracts from the writings of Henry Van Dyke, Mary Mapes Dodge, Oliver Herford, and Frances Hodgson Burnett; and Messrs. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, for permission to quote from Clinton Scollard's work.

A STUDY IN VIOLET

Next to the rose, whose divine right to monarchy cannot be questioned, the violet is the poet's flower. No other is mentioned so frequently, or with such affection.

It is impossible to say when this familiar flower first blossomed in literature. The "Odyssey" would not be complete without it, nor would the "Eclogues" of the Roman singer, Virgil. Ovid was fond of horticulture, and the violet was not forgotten when the bard was inditing his smooth-flowing hexameters. Pliny and Cicero, too, were violet-lovers. In the Bible there is no mention of the flower; but in Chrysostom's "First Homily" occurs perhaps the first appearance of our little friend in Christian literature.

A STUDY IN VIOLET

Chaucer's affection for "floures" is well known. Of the many Shakspearean quotations in this field, probably the most familiar comprises the exquisite lines:

"Violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath."

Passing to the more recent literary period, the individual taste of the poet becomes noticeable. Strange to relate, Wordsworth could have cared little for the shy blossom. Although he does say,

"Long as there are violets
They will have their place in story,"

he leaves it to others to tell the story,—referring to the violet only three or four times in all his voluminous writings. His counterpart in this respect, among American poets, is

A STUDY IN VIOLET

Longfellow, in whose musical numbers, singularly enough, the violet has almost no place at all. Nor was the flower a favorite with Tennyson, though each of his rare references to it is a gem; as this,—

“The meadow your walks have left so sweet
That wherever a March wind sighs,
He sets the jewel-prints of his feet
In violets blue as your eyes.”

American writers have, on the whole, given the violet a more prominent place than have their English brethren of the lyre. Bryant's pages, for instance, are fragrant with its perfume, and he has, in special, immortalized the yellow variety in more than one finely turned stanza.

If most of the world's great bards have been reluctant to give Lady Violet her due,

A STUDY IN VIOLET

not so the numerous rank and file of "minor poets." The verse of Alice Cary, Lucy Larcom, Grace Greenwood, Elizabeth Akers, Adelaide Proctor and dozens of others is a garden of wild-flowers, with the violet leading the dance. Some of the prettiest conceits occur in the writings of authors so obscure that their names are unfamiliar to most readers. For instance, one must look far for a volume of poetry bearing the name of Ethel M. Kelley; yet these fine lines are attributed to her:

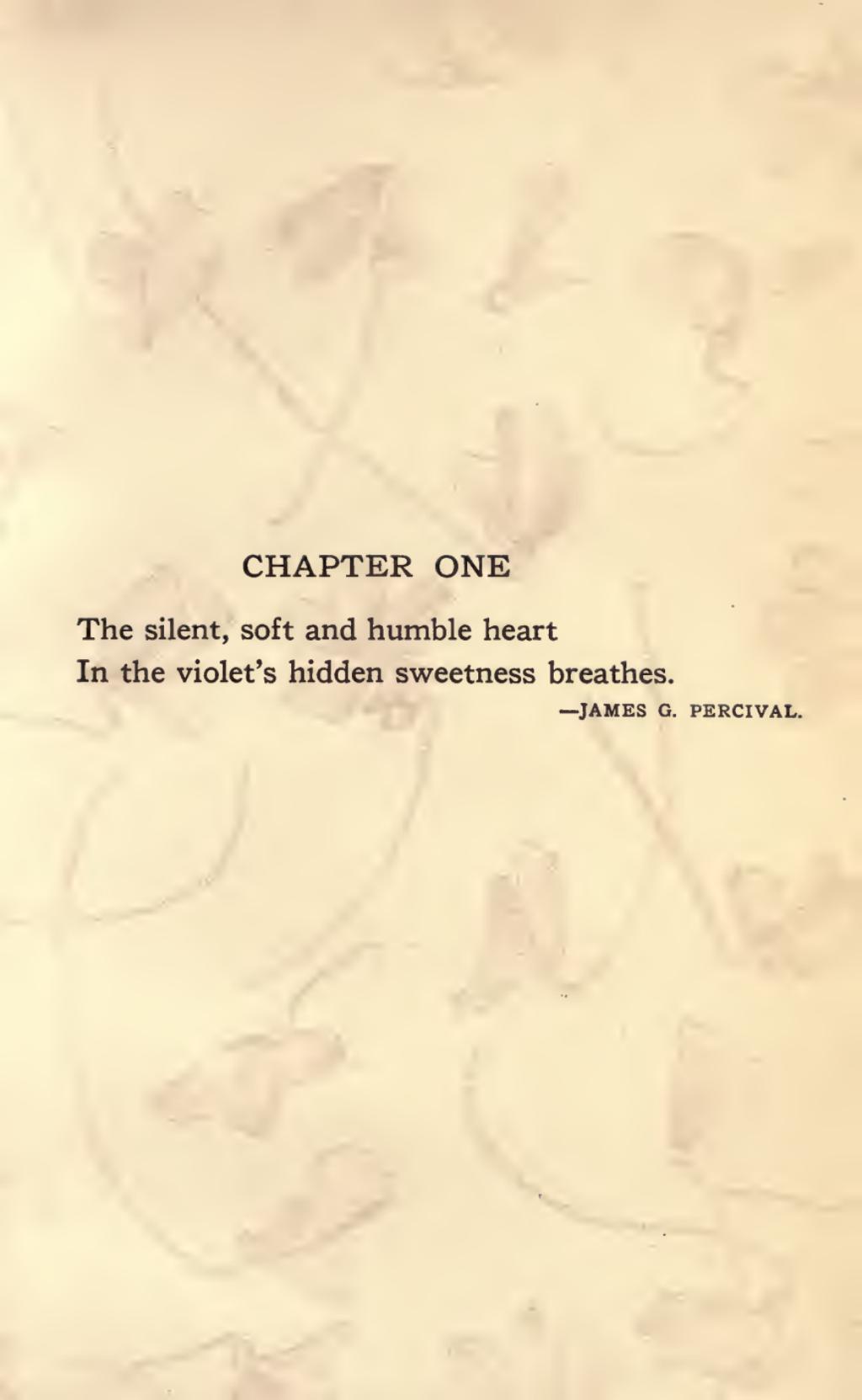
"In her hair the sunbeams nest,
And in her eyes the violets blow,
While in the summer of her breast
The songbird thoughts fit to and fro."

The compiler of this book has spent many pleasant hours in culling his violets from the immense field of English and American poetry.

A STUDY IN VIOLET

Another volume of equal size could readily be made up from extracts containing references to the flower, to say nothing of German, French, Spanish, Italian, and Scandinavian poetry, which has not been considered in his quest.

WILLIS BOYD ALLEN



CHAPTER ONE

The silent, soft and humble heart
In the violet's hidden sweetness breathes.

—JAMES G. PERCIVAL.



CHAPTER ONE

The air is white with snow-flakes clinging;
Between the gusts that come and go
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing.

Or can it be the breeze is bringing
The breath of violets?—Ah, no!
The air is white with snow-flakes clinging.

It is my lady's voice that's stringing
Its beads of gold to song; and so
Methinks I hear the woodlark singing.

The violets I see upspringing
Are in my lady's eyes, I trow;
The air is white with snow-flakes clinging.

—JOHN PAYNE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

A chaplet on her head she wore
(Heigho, the chaplet!);
Of sweet violets therein was store—
She's sweeter than the violet.

—EDMUND SPENSER.

Tell me, this sweet morn,
Tell me all you know,—
Tell me, was I born?
Tell me, did I grow?
Fell I from the blue
Like a drop of rain,
Then, as violets do,
Blossomed up again?

—ROBERT BUCHANAN.

Misty grew the violets of her eyes.

—HELEN B. BOSTWICK.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The violet loves the sunny bank,
The cowslip loves the lea,
The scarlet creeper loves the elm;
But I love—thee.

—BAYARD TAYLOR.

Your name pronounced brings to my heart
A feeling like the violet's breath.

—COVENTRY PATMORE.

Out from the leaves of my "Lucille"
Falls a faded violet.
Sweet and faint as its fragrance steal
Out from the leaves of my "Lucille"
Tender memories, and I feel
A sense of longing and regret.
Out from the leaves of my "Lucille"
Falls a faded violet.

—WALTER LEARNED.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Be other brows by pleasure's wreath
Or glory's coronal oppressed,
To me the humblest flower seems best,
Some sweet wild bloom with dews still wet.
So, Love, but kiss a violet—
O, Love, but kiss a violet—
And fling it to my breast!

—GRACE GREENWOOD.

Within my reach!
I could have touched!
I might have chanced that way!
Soft sauntered through the village,
Sauntered as soft away!
So unsuspected violets
Within the fields lie low,
Too late for striving fingers
That passed an hour ago.

—EMILY DICKINSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The silent, soft and humble heart
In the violet's hidden sweetness breathes.

—JAMES G. PERCIVAL.

Perchance the violets o'er my dust
Will half betray their buried trust,
And say, their blue eyes full of dew,
"She loved you better than you knew."

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Nature does not recognize
This strife that rends the earth and skies;
No war-dreams vex the winter sleep of clover-heads and
daisy-eyes;
When blood her grassy altar wets;
She sends the pitying violets
To heal the outrage with their bloom and cover it with
soft regrets.

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Sure thou didst flourish once! and many springs,
Many bright mornings, much dew, many showers
Passed o'er thy head; many light hearts and wings,
Which now are dead, lodged in thy living bowers.

And still a new succession sings and flies;
Fresh groves grow up, and their green branches shoot
Towards the old and still enduring skies;
While the low violet thrives at their root.

—HENRY VAUGHAN.

Blue eyes
Whose sleepy lid like snow on violets lies.

—THOMAS MOORE.

Love comes and goes as the free wind blows,
That asks not, as it passes,
If it touches the head of the roses red
Or the violets down in the grasses.

—HOSEA G. BLAKE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Little maid, a violet
Is knocking at your door,
Eagerly its message sweet
Repeating o'er and o'er:
"Some one sent me with his love,—
Take me, I implore!"

—ANONYMOUS.

Where fall the tears of love the rose appears,
And where the ground is bright with friendship's tears,
Forget-me-not, and violets, heavenly blue,
Spring, glittering with the cheerful drops like dew.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

We shall be, as we are,
(Still breathes the secret strain)
Within our Father's loving care
When violets come again.

—EMILY S. OAKEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Where wind-flower and violet, amber and white,
On south-sloping brooksides should smile in the light,
O'er the cold winter beds of their late-waking roots
The frosty flake eddies, the ice crystal shoots.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

When Roman fields are red with cyclamen,
And in the palace gardens you may find,
Under great leaves and sheltering briony-bind,
Clusters of cream-white violets, O then
The ruined city of immortal men
Must smile, a little to her fate resigned.

—EDMUND W. GOSSE.

Beside me, where I rest,
Thy loving hands will set
The flowers that please me best,
Moss-rose and violet.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Once in a dream I saw the flowers
That bud and bloom in Paradise;
More fair they are than waking eyes
Have seen in all this world of ours.
And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
And faint the lily on its stem,
And faint the perfect violet,
Compared with them.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

I do not know
The subtle secret of the snow,
That hides away the violets
Till April teaches them to blow.
Enough for me
Their tender loveliness to see,
Assured that little things and large
Fulfil God's purpose equally.

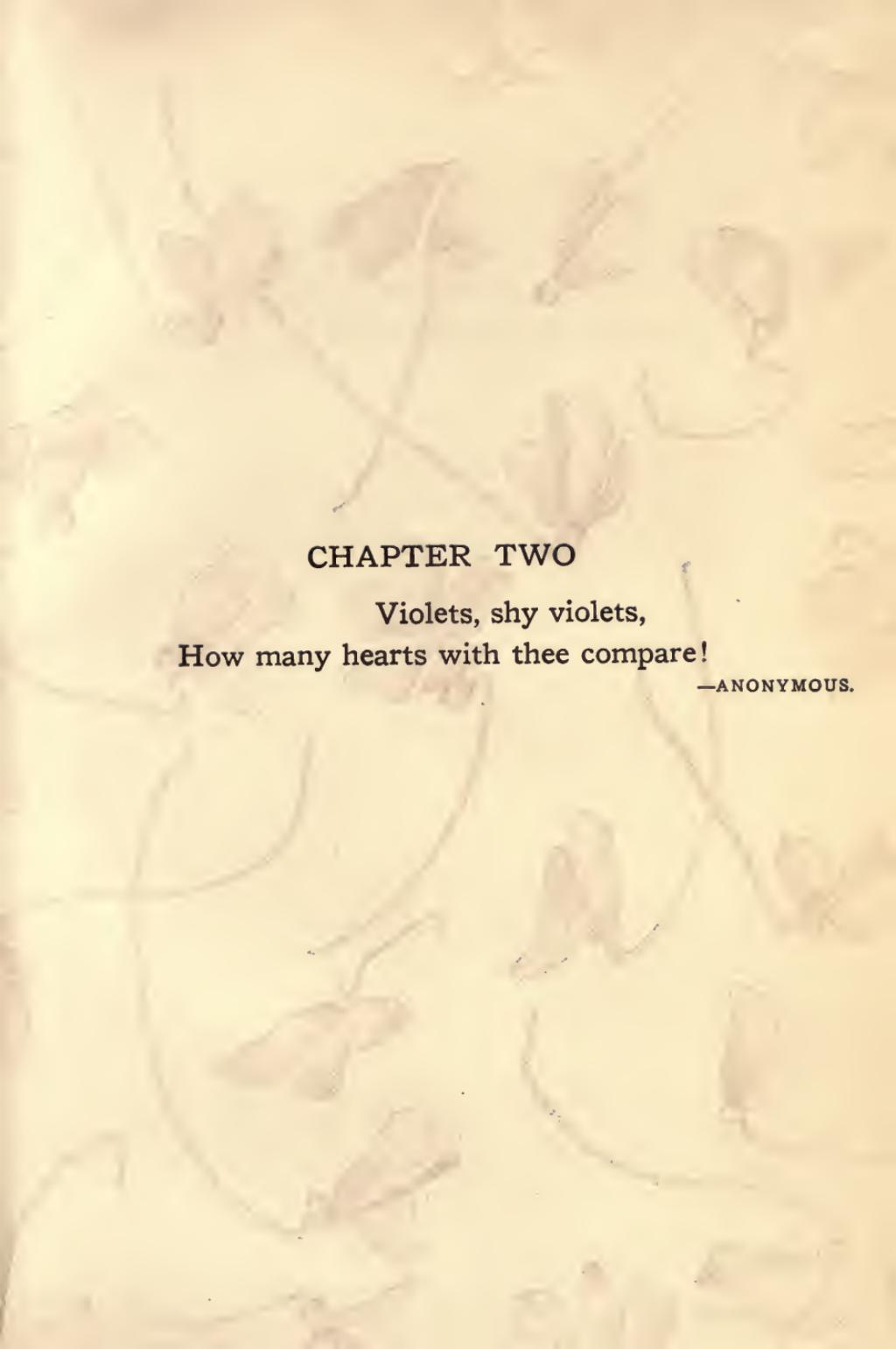
—MARY BRADLEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Violet, sweet violet!
Thine eyes are full of tears;
Are they wet,
Even yet,
With the thoughts of other years?
Or with gladness are they full,
For the night so beautiful,
And longing for those far-off spheres?

Violet, dear violet,
Thy blue eyes are only wet
With joy and love of Him who sent thee,
And for the fulfilling sense
Of that glad obedience
Which made thee all that Nature meant thee.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.



CHAPTER TWO

Violets, shy violets,
How many hearts with thee compare!

—ANONYMOUS.



CHAPTER TWO

Under a mantle of frost-work and snow,
Close by the arc of the fairy-queen's ring,
Sleeping in delicate grottoes of ice,
Clusters of violets dream of the spring.

—D. CHAUNCEY BREWER.

That strain again! It had a dying fall:
Oh! it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets
Stealing and giving odor.

—WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Slow rose the silken-fringed lids, and eyes
Like violets wet with dew drank in the light.

—GRACE GREENWOOD.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The careful little violet,
She makes me think of you,
Holding her leafy petticoats
From out the morning dew.

—ALICE CARY.

The violet breathes, by our door, as sweetly
As in the air of her native East.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

When the earliest violets ope
On the sunniest southern slope,
When the air is sweet and keen
Ere the full-blown flower is seen,
When that blithe, forerunning air
Breathes more hope than thou canst bear,
Thou, oh buried, broken heart,
Into quivering life shalt start.

—EDITH M. THOMAS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The wind-flowers and the violets were still too sound asleep,
Under the snow's warm blanket, close folded, soft and deep.

—CELIA THAXTER.

Beautiful maid, discreet,
Where is the mate that is meet,
Meet for thee—strive as he could—
Yet will I kneel at thy feet,
Fearing another one should,
Violet!

—COSMO MONKHOUSE.

Violets, shy violets,
How many hearts with thee compare,
Who hide themselves in thickest green,
And thence unseen
Ravish the enraptured air
With sweetness, dewy, fresh and fair!

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I think the very violets
Are looking the way you'll come!

—ALICE CARY.

Once, long ago, in summer's glow,
We threaded, you and I,
A garden's maze of pleasant ways,
Whose beauty charmed the eye,—
Where violets bent in sweet content
And pinks stood proud and high.

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Then, feeble man, be wise, tak tent
How industry can fetch content.
Behold the bees where'er they wing,
Or through the bonny bowers o' spring,
Where violets or roses blaw,
An' siller dew-draps nightly fa'.

—ROBERT FERGUSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

In her hair the sunbeams nest,
And in her eyes the violets blow,
While in the summer of her breast
The songbird thoughts flit to and fro.

—ETHEL M. KELLEY.

Violets steeped in dreamy odors,
Humble as the Mother mild,
Blue as were her eyes when watching
O'er her sleeping child.

—ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

O Mother Nature, kind to every child
Blessed with the gift of speech, the gift of grace,
Teach thou the modest violet, shy and wild,
To look with trustfulness into my face.

—ISAAC B. CHOATE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

In Farsistan the violet spreads
Its leaves to the rival sky.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

My love, whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy petals are,
And sweeter than the violet.

—ANDREW LANG.

From wintry days blue violets shrink
From wintry lives blue eyes will turn.

—HARRISON ROBERTSON.

Her eyes be like the violets
Ablow in Sudbury lane;
When she doth smile, her face is sweet
As blossoms after rain.

—LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Through jocund reel, or measured tread
Of stately minuet,
Like fairy vision shone the bloom
Of rose and violet,
As, hand in hand with Washington,
The hero of the day,
The smiling face and nymph-like grace
Of Nancy led the way.

—ZITELLA COCKE.

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own,—
What are you when the Rose is blown?

—SIR HENRY WOTTON.

Rock-gnawing lichens that forerun the feet
Of violets.

—JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

True Brahmin, in the meadows wet,
Exound the Vedas of the violet!

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

Soon again shall music swell the breeze;
Soon, issuing forth, shall glitter through the trees
Vestures of nuptial white; and hymns be sung
And violets scattered round; and old and young
In every cottage porch with garlands green,
Stand still to gaze, and gazing, bless the scene;
While, her dark eyes declining, by his side,
Moves in her virgin veil the gentle bride.

—SAMUEL ROGERS.

Der Mai ist da mit seinen goldenen Lichtern
Und seinen Lüften und gewürzten Düften,
Und freundlich lockt er mit den weissen Blüthen,
Und grusst aus tausend blauen Veilchenaugen.

—HEINRICH HEINE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I only know
That she was very true and good:
The queenliest lily cannot match
The shy, sweet violet of the wood.

—WEATHERLY.

Her bloom the rose outvies,
The lily dares no plea,
The violet's glory dies,
No flower so sweet can be;
When love is in her eyes
What need of spring for me?

—ANNA MARIA FAY.

Who is there can sing of a more divine thing
Than the edge of the woods in the edge of the spring,
Ere the violets peep, while hepaticas sleep,
And still in the hollows the snow-drifts lie deep?

—MILDRED G. PHILLIPS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The erthe was ful softe and swete.
Through moysture of the welle wete
Sprong up the sote grene, grene gras,
As fayre, as thycke, as myster was.
But moche amended it the place
That therthe was of such a grace
That it of floures hath plente,
That both in somer and wynter be.
There sprange the vyolet al newe,
And fresshe pervynke ryche of hewe,
And floures yelowe, white and rede;
Such plente grewe there never in mede.
Ful gaye was al the grounde, and queynt,
And poudred, as men had it peynt,
With many a freshe and sondry floure
That casten up ful good savoure.

—GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

Low lilies press about thy feet
With violets changing kisses sweet.

—JANE AUSTIN.

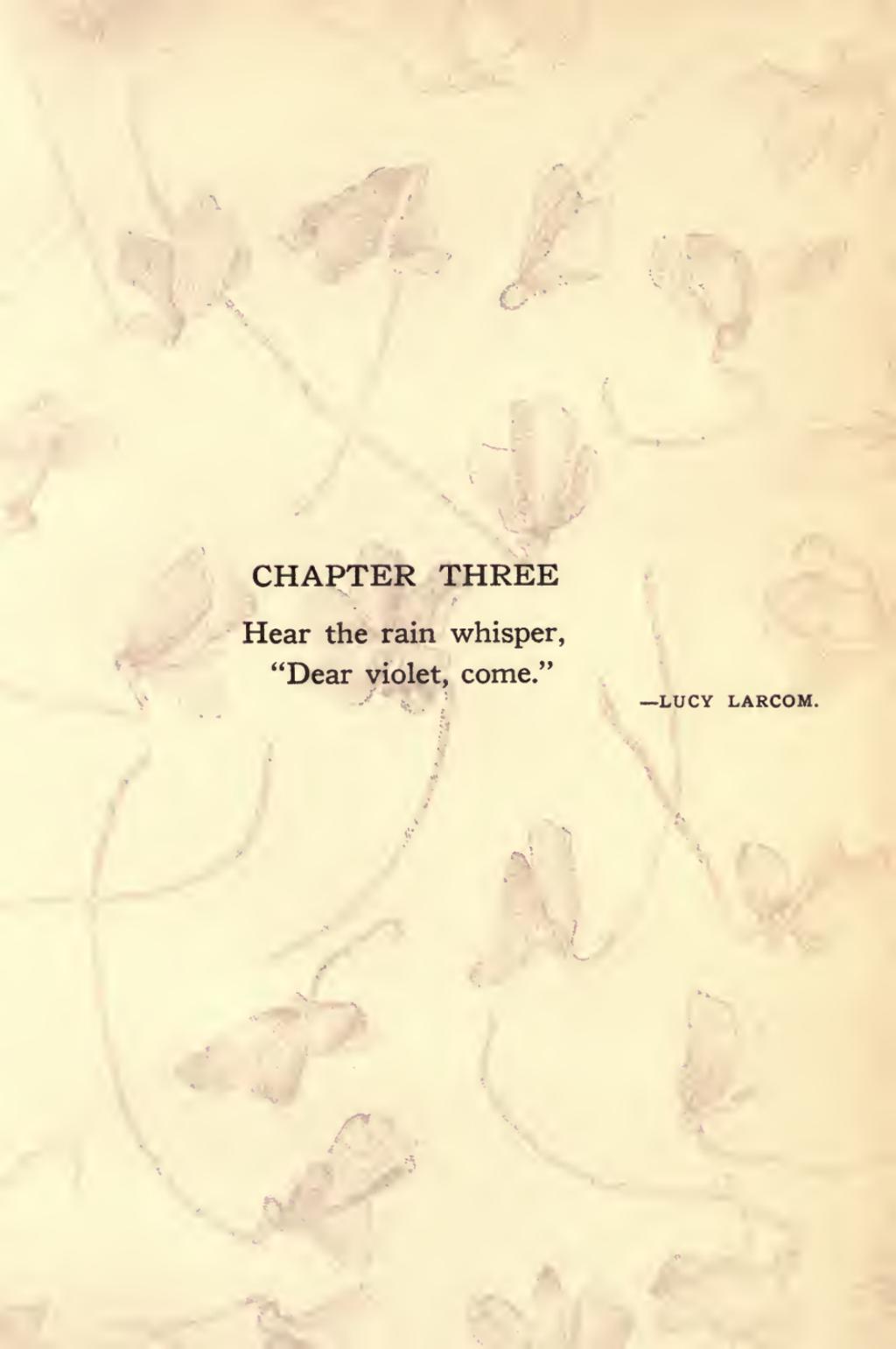
THE VIOLET BOOK

Come up, come up, O soft spring airs,
Come from your silver shining seas,
Where all day long you toss the wave
About the low and palm-plumed keys!

For here the violet in the wood
Thrills with the fulness you shall take,
And wrapped away from life and love,
The wild rose dreams, and fain would wake.

—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.





CHAPTER THREE

Hear the rain whisper,
"Dear violet, come."

—LUCY LARCOM.



CHAPTER THREE

The brown buds thicken on the trees,
Unbound, the free streams sing,
As March leads forth, across the leas,
The wild and windy spring.

Where in the fields the melted snow
Leaves hollows warm and wet,
Ere many days will sweetly blow
The first blue violet.

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Along the wood-paths, warm and wet,
Springs up the frail wood-violet.

—JAMES BENJAMIN KENYON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The wild
Winds clash and clang, and broken boughs are piled
At feet of writhing trees. The violets raise
Their heads without affright, without amaze,
And sleep through all the din, as sleeps a child.

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

Violet is for faithfulness,
Which in me shall abide.

—ANONYMOUS.

Such sweet prophetic gladness as we feel
When first we find beneath the bare spring hills
So lately circled by the whirling snows,
The crocus peeping from the withered leaves;
When first we see the lingering day of flowers
Dawning in violets blue.

—GRACE GREENWOOD.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The violet varies from the lily as far
As oak from elm.

—ALFRED TENNYSON.

Some wear the lily's stainless white
And some the rose of passion,
And some the violet's heavenly blue,
But each in its own fashion.

—HENRY VAN DYKE.

Beauty clear and fair
Where the air
Rather like a perfume dwells;
Where the violet and the rose
Their blue veins and blush disclose
And come to honor nothing else.

—SAMUEL FLETCHER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

No tree unfolds its timid bud,
Chill pours the hillside's chilling flood,
The tuneless forest all is dumb—
Whence then, fair violet, didst thou come?

—GOODRICH.

All flowers died when Eve left Paradise,
And all the world was flowerless for a while,
Until a little child was laid in earth;
Then from its grave grew violets for its eyes,
And from its lips rose-petals for its smile.

—MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

Sweet and sad, like a white dove's note,
Strange voices wakened my soul to glee,
And soft scents strayed from the violet's throat.

—BERNARD WELLER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

When the rain beats and March winds blow,
We should be glad if we could know
How, not so very far away,
There shineth a serener day
Where birds are blithe, and happy children pass
To gather violets among the grass.

—EMILY S. OAKLEY.

Like a violet, like a lark,
Like the dawn that kills the dark,
Like a dew-drop, trembling, clinging,
Is the poet's first sweet singing.

—RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

Earth folds dark blankets round the violet blue.

—AUSTIN DOBSON.

Her mild eyes were innocent of ill
As violets in sheltered nooks enshrined.

—CARRYL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

O violets, who never fret, nor say, "I won't!" "I will!"
Who only live to do your best His wishes to fulfil,
Teach us your sweet obedience.

—CELIA THAXTER.

When beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the bluebird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

I hold thy violets against my face
And deeply breathe the haunting purple scent
That fills my weary heart with sweet content
And lays upon my soul a chrismal grace;
The air around me for a little space
Is heavy with the fragrance they have lent,
And every passing wind that heavenward went
Has held thy blossoms in a close embrace.

—MYRTLE REED.

THE VIOLET BOOK

'Twas when the spring was coming, when the snow
Had melted, and fresh winds began to blow,
And girls were selling violets in the town.

—ROBERT BUCHANAN.

My house is small and low;
But with pictures such as these,—
Of the sunset, and the row
Of illuminated trees,
And the heifer as she drinks
From the field of meadowed ground,
With the violets and the pinks
For a border all around,—
Let me never, foolish, pray
For a vision wider spread,
But, contented, only say,
Give me, Lord, my daily bread.

—ALICE CARY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

How can our fancies help but go
Out from this realm of mist and rain,
Out from this realm of sleet and snow,
When the first southern violets blow?

—THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

But one short week ago the trees were bare,
And winds were keen, and violets pinched with frost;
Today the spring is in the air.

—JOHN TODHUNTER.

Are there violets in the sod,
Crocuses beneath the clod?
When will Boreas give us peace?
Or has Winter signed a lease
For another month of frost,
Leaving Spring to pay the cost?
For it seems he still is king,
Though 'tis spring.

—CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH.

THE VIOLET BOOK

See, the violets call from out the grasses,

Look, the purple answers from the ground;
Azure melts and to that warbler passes,
Sudden, a sky-fleck on the fences found!

—CHARLES DE KAY.

I know that thou art the word of my God, dear violet.

—SIDNEY LANIER.

On sheltered banks, beneath the dripping eaves,
Spring's earliest nurselings spread their glowing leaves,
Bright with the hues from wider pictures won,
White, azure, golden,—drift, or sky, or sun;—
The snowdrop, bearing on her patient breast
The frozen trophy torn from winter's crest;
The violet, gazing on the arch of blue
Till her own iris wears its deepened hue;
The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould,
Naked and shivering with his cup of gold.

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The meadow your walks have left so sweet
That wherever a March wind sighs,
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes.

—ALFRED TENNYSON.

The warring hosts of Winter and of Spring
Are hurtling o'er the plains.
All night I heard their battle clarions ring
And jar the window-panes.

The saddened robins flit through leafless trees,
And chirp with tuneless voice,
And wait the conquering sun, the unbinding breeze;
They cannot yet rejoice.

Slowly the victor Spring her foe outflanks,
And countermimes his snows;
Then, unawares, along the grassy banks,
Her ambushed violets throws.

—CHRISTOPHER P. CRANCH.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Knowledge this man prizes best
Seems fantastic to the rest:
Pondering shadows, colors, clouds,
Grass-buds and caterpillar shrouds,
Boughs on which the wild bees settle,
Tints that spot the violet's petal.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

But who hath breathed the scent of violets
And not that moment been some lover glad?

—ARLO BATES.

What blooms here,
Filling the honeyed atmosphere
With faint, delicious fragrances,
Freighted with blessed memories?
The earliest March violet,
Dear as the image of Regret,
And beautiful as Hope.

—EMMA LAZARUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

Pit, pat, patter, clatter,
Sudden sun, and clatter, patter!
First the blue and then the shower;
Bursting bud and smiling flower;
Brooks set free with tinkling ring;
Birds too full of song to sing;
Crisp old leaves astir with pride,
Where the timid violets hide:
All things ready with a will,—
April's coming up the hill!

—MARY MAPES DODGE.

Violets suit when homebirds build and sing.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake, arise, and come away
To the wild woods and the plains;
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves;
Where the pine its garland weaves,
Of sapless green and ivy dim,
Round stems that never kiss the sun;
Where the lawns and pastures be,
And the sand-hills of the sea;
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets;
And wind-flowers and violets,
Which yet join not scent to hue,
Crown the pale year, weak and new.

—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

CHAPTER FOUR

The lone violet, which for love's own sake,
Its life exhales in pure unconscious good.

—FRANCES L. MACE.



CHAPTER FOUR

In my breast
Spring wakens too; and my regret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

—ALFRED TENNYSON.

Deep violets you liken to
The kindest eyes that look on you
Without a thought disloyal.

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

To thee the nymphs of the forest offer their store of lilies,
And at thy feet fair Nais lays her violets pale.

—VIRGIL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The wind sprang up in the tree-tops
And shrieked with a voice of death,
But the rough-voiced breeze, that shook the trees,
Was touched with a violet's breath.

—PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR.

One morn a lad cried in the street,
“Fresh violets!” and, as in answer sweet,
A bluebird flung, bouquet-like, clear and strong,
Athwart the misty window, his first song.

—WILLIAM STRUTHERS.

The April morn
Climbs softly up the eastern sky,
And glimmers through the milk-white thorn,
Or dances where the violets lie.

—SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

THE VIOLET BOOK

April violets glow
In wayside nooks, close clustering into groups,
Like shy elves hiding from the traveler's eye.

—THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.

Violets begin to blush;
Speedwell opens too her eye
And the kingcup wooes the sky.

—EDWARD CAPERN.

It isn't raining rain to me, but fields of clover bloom,
Where any buccaneering bee can find a bed and room;
A health unto the happy, and a fig for him who frets!
It isn't raining rain to me, it's raining violets.

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

She walked across the fields icebound,
Like some shy, sunny hint of spring,
And stooping suddenly she found
A violet, a dainty thing,
Which shunned the chilly light of day
Until sweet Aprille came that way.

—HARRISON ROBERTSON.

The violet trills, through the bluebird,
Of the heaven that within her she feels.

—LUCY LARCOM.

Like those same winds when, startled from their lair,
They hunt up violets, and free swift brooks
From icy caves, even as thy clear looks
Bid my heart bloom, and sing, and break all care.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

And now the other violets are crowding up to see
What welcome in this blustering world may chance for
them to be.

They lift themselves on slender stems in every shaded
place,
Heads over heads, all turned one way, wonder in every
face.

—LUCY LARCOM.

It is April, crying sore and weeping
O'er the chilly earth so brown and bare.
"When I went away," she murmurs, sobbing,
"All my violet banks were starred with blue;
Who, O who has been here, basely robbing
Bloom and odor from the fragrant crew?"
Thus she plaineth. Then ten million voices
Tiny, murmurous, like drops of rain,
Raised in song as when the wind rejoices,
Ring the answer, "We are here again!"

—SARAH CHANNING WOOLSEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Now fades the last long streak of snow,

Now bourgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets grow.

—ALFRED TENNYSON.

Violets now, that strew
The green lap of the new-come spring.

—WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Elder boughs were budding yet,
Oaken boughs looked wintry still,
But primrose and veined violet
In the mossful turf were set,
While mating birds made haste to sing
And build with right good-will.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Violets,
Which April ne'er forgets!

—EMILY S. OAKLEY.

Sweetly breathing, vernal air,
That with kind warmth doth repair
Winter's ruins; from whose breast
All the gums and spice o' the East
Borrow their perfumes; whose eye
Gilds the morn, and clears the sky;
Whose disheveled tresses shed
Pearls upon the violet bed.

—THOMAS CAREW.

A wealth of clover clothes the place
Where, clad in buff-lined coats of blue,
Our countrymen o'erthrew
Their alien foe; and violets efface
All signs of combat.

—D. CHAUNCEY BREWER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Down through the sunshine
Wings flutter and fly;—
Quick, little violet,
Open your eye!

—LUCY LARCOM.

Where violets hide,
Where star-flowers strew the rivulet's side,
And blue-birds, in the misty spring,
Of cloudless skies and summer sing.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Here the first violets
Perhaps will bud unseen,
And a dove, maybe,
Return to nestle here.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE VIOLET BOOK

In winter, when the garden-plots were bare,
And deep winds piloted the shiven snow,
He saw its gleaming in the cottage fire,
While, with a book of botany on his knee,
He sat and hunger'd for a breath of spring.
Here beds of roses sweetened all the page;
Here lilies whiter than the falling snow
Crept gleaming softly from the printed lines;
Here dewy violets sparkled till the book
Dazzled his eyes with rays of misty blue.

—ROBERT BUCHANAN.

Die blauen Veilchen der Aengelein,
Die rothen Rosen der Wängelein,
Die weissen Lilien der Händchen klein,
Die blühen und blühen noch immerfort,
Und nur das Herzchen ist verdorrt.

—HEINRICH HEINE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Again has come the springtime
With the crocus' golden bloom,
With the smell of the fresh-turned earth mould
And the violet's perfume.

—SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

Under the green hedges, after the snow,
There do the dear little violets grow,
Hiding their modest and beautiful heads
Under the hawthorne in soft, mossy beds.

—JOHN MOULTRIE.

A duller sense than mine should feel
The stir in nature's warming soul;
It makes the shouting bluebirds reel,
And bursts the violet's twisted scroll.

—GEORGE HENRY BOKER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I see Thee in the distant blue,
But in the violet's dell of dew,
Behold, I breathe and touch Thee, too.

—JOHN B. TABB.

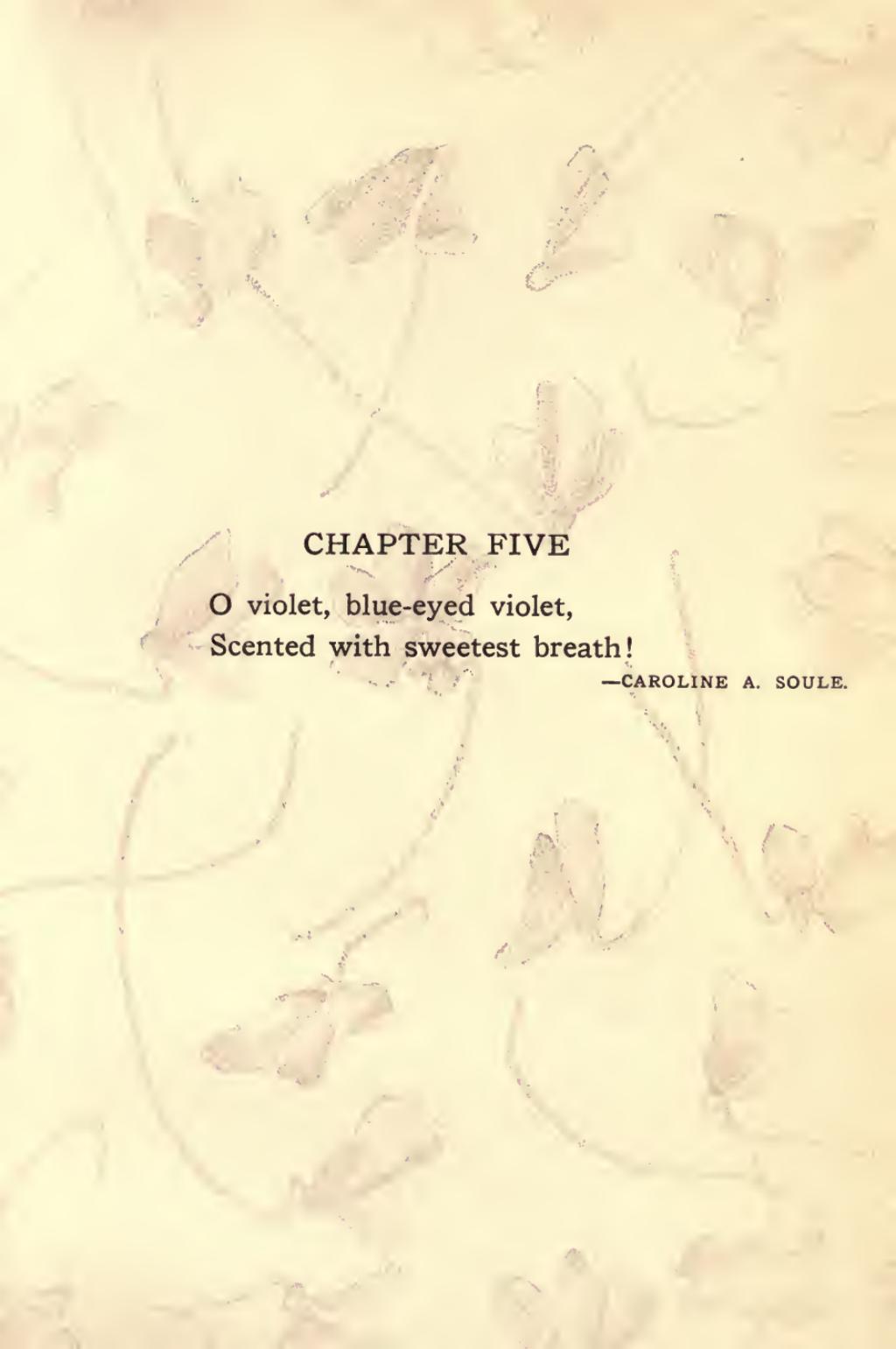
Spring sat dejected in a sheltered nook
And sighed because of the long-lingered snow,
And prayed that warm, life-giving winds might blow;
When at her feet there grew, with trembling look,
A violet that whispered: "I forsook
My cell to comfort thee and still thy woe."
Then, filled with hope, Spring said: "I now shall go
And greet each hill and vale and winding brook."
Where'er she went, earth blessed her with its flowers:
Arbutus, columbines, anemones,
And sunny marigolds that deck the wet
Lowlands. But in the soothing moonlit hours,
When dreaming 'neath the blossom-laden trees,
She holds with loving hands the violet.

—JOHN LUTHER BRENIZER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Ein kleines blau Veilchen
Stand eben erst ein Weilchen
Unten im Thal am Bach;
Da dacht' es einmal nach
Und sprach:
"Dass ich hier unten blüh'
Lohnt sich kaum der Müh';
Muss mich überall bücken
Und drücken.
Ei," spricht' es, "hier ist's schön,
Aber alles kann man doch nicht sehen;
So ein Berg
Ist doch nur ein Schwerz;
Auf der Alp da droben,
Das wär, eher zu loben:
Da möcht' ich wohl sein,
Da gückt' ich bis in Himmel hinein."

—FRIEDRICH FÖRSTER.



CHAPTER FIVE

O violet, blue-eyed violet,
Scented with sweetest breath!

—CAROLINE A. SOULE.



CHAPTER FIVE

Up from the sweet South comes the lingering May,
Sets the first wind-flower trembling on its stem;
Scatters her violets with lavish hands,
White, blue and amber.

—CELIA THAXTER.

The vales shall laugh in flowers, the woods
Grow misty-green with leafing buds,
And violets and wind-flowers sway
Against the throbbing heart of May.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

When springtime comes,
Primrose and violet haunt the mossy bank.

—HENRY G. HEWLETT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Rosy and white on the wanton breeze
The petals fall from the apple-trees,
And under the hedge where the shade lies wet
Are children, picking the violet.

—F. W. BOURDILLON.

The same sweet sounds are in my ear
My early childhood loved to hear.
The violet there, in soft May dew,
Comes up, as modest and as true.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Farewell to thee, France! but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
The violet still grows in the depths of thy valleys,
Though withered, thy tears will unfold it again.

—LORD BYRON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Where the rose doth wear her blushes
Like a garment, and the fair
And modest violets sit together,
Weaving, in mild May weather,
Purples out of dew and air
Fit for any queen to wear.

—ALICE CARY.

Hear the rain whisper,
“Dear violet, come!”

—LUCY LARCOM.

On every sunny hillock spread,
The pale primrose lifts her head;
Rich with sweets, the western gale
Sweeps along the cowslip'd dale;
Every bank, with violets gay,
Smiles to welcome in the May.

—ROBERT SOUTHEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The air was soft and fresh and sweet;
The slopes in spring's new verdure lay,
And wet with dew-drops at my feet
 Bloomed the young violets of May.

—JOHN HOWARD BRYANT.

In each hedgerow spring must hasten
 Cowslips sweet to set;
And under every leaf, in shadow
 Hide a violet.

—ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

The buds of April had burst into bloom on the willow and
 maple,
Fresh with dew was the sod, with dim blue violets sprinkled.

—D. CHAUNCEY BREWER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The dream of winter broken,
Behold her, blue and dear,
Shy Violet, sure token
That April's here!

—FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

Not the first violet on a woodland lea
Seemed a more visible gift of Spring than she.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

No more shall meads be decked with flowers,
Nor sweetness dwell in rosy bowers,
Nor greenest buds on branches spring,
Nor warbling birds delight to sing,
Nor April violets paint the grove,
If I forsake my Celia's love.

—THOMAS CAREW.

THE VIOLET BOOK

And O, and O,
The daisies blow,
And the primroses are wakened;
And the violets white
Sit in silver light,
And the green buds are long in the spike end.

—OLD ENGLISH SONG.

A violet that nestles cheek to the mellowed ground;
The humming of a happy brook about its daily round;
The woody breath of pines; the smell of loosening sods;
Such simple links of being,—such common things of God's.

—ELLA M. BAKER.

Merry, ever-merry May!
Made of sunbeams, shade and showers,
Bursting buds and breathing flowers!
Dripping locked and rosy-vested,
Violet slippere, rainbow crested.

—WILLIAM D. GALLAGHER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

There were banks of purple violet,
And arbutus, first whisper of the May.

—FRANCES L. MACE.

Through thee, meseems, the very rose is red,
From thee the violet steals its breath in May.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;
Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity;
Beauty through my senses stole,—
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Now the tender, sweet arbutus
Trails her blossom-clustered vines,
And the many-figured cinquefoil
In the shady hollow twines;
Here, behind this crumbled tree-trunk,
With the cooling showers wet,
Fresh and upright, blooms the sunny
Golden-yellow violet.

—DORA READ GOODALE.

Saintly violets, plucked in bosky dell.

—CLINTON SCOLLARD.

Thy feasting tables shall be hills
With daisies spread, and daffadils;
Where thou shalt sit, and red-breast by,
For meat, shall give thee melody.
Ile give thee chaines and carkanets
Of primroses and violets.

—ROBERT HERRICK.

THE VIOLET BOOK

With saucy gesture
Primroses flare,
And roguish violets
Hidden with care.
And whatsoever
There stirs and strives,
The spring's contented,
It works and thrives.

—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

White violets, pure violets,
That might be wreathed in coronets
For baby brows of spotless mould,
That no earth shadows overfold;
White winsome things with dovelike wings
That brood in grassy nest,
As thick as stars no tempest mars
With presence of unrest.

—EMILY S. OAKLEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Look forth, Beloved, through the tender air,
And let thine eyes
The violets be.

—BAYARD TAYLOR.

The violets whisper from the shade
Which their own leaves have made:
“Men scent our fragrance on the air,
Yet take no heed
Of humble lessons we would read.”

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

The gentle drift
Of odorous distillings in the air,
Daffodils growing on the field’s green breast,
Buds all a-blow, and the enchanted breath
Of violets peeping in the damp hedgerow,
Kindled to being.

—CHRISTINA CATHERINE LIDDELL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

That young May violet to me is dear,
And I visit the silent streamlet near,
To look on the lovely flower.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

The larch has donned its rosy plumes,
And hastens its emerald beads to string:
The warblers now are on the wing,
Across the pathless ocean glooms.
Through tender grass and violet blooms
I move along and gaily sing.

—RICHARD WILTON.

Violets stir and arbutus wakes,
Claytonia's rosy bells unfold;
Dandelion through the meadow makes
A royal road, with seals of gold.

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Dear little violet,
Don't be afraid!
Lift your blue eyes
From the rock's mossy shade!

All the birds call for you
Out of the sky:
May is here, waiting,
And so, too, am I.

Come, pretty violet,
Winter's away:
Come, for without you
May isn't May.

Now all is beautiful
Under the sky.
May's here—and violets!
Winter, good-bye!

—LUCY LARCOM.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace,
Throws out the snow-drop and the crocus first,
The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue.

—JAMES THOMSON.

While May bedecks the naked trees
With tassels and embroideries,
And many blue-eyed violets beam
Along the edges of the stream.

—HENRY VAN DYKE.

The country ever has a lagging spring,
Waiting for May to call its violets forth,
And June its roses.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

And in the meadows soft, on either hand,
Blossomed white parsley and the violet.

—HOMER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Welcome, maids of honor,
 You do bring
 In the Spring,
And wait upon her.

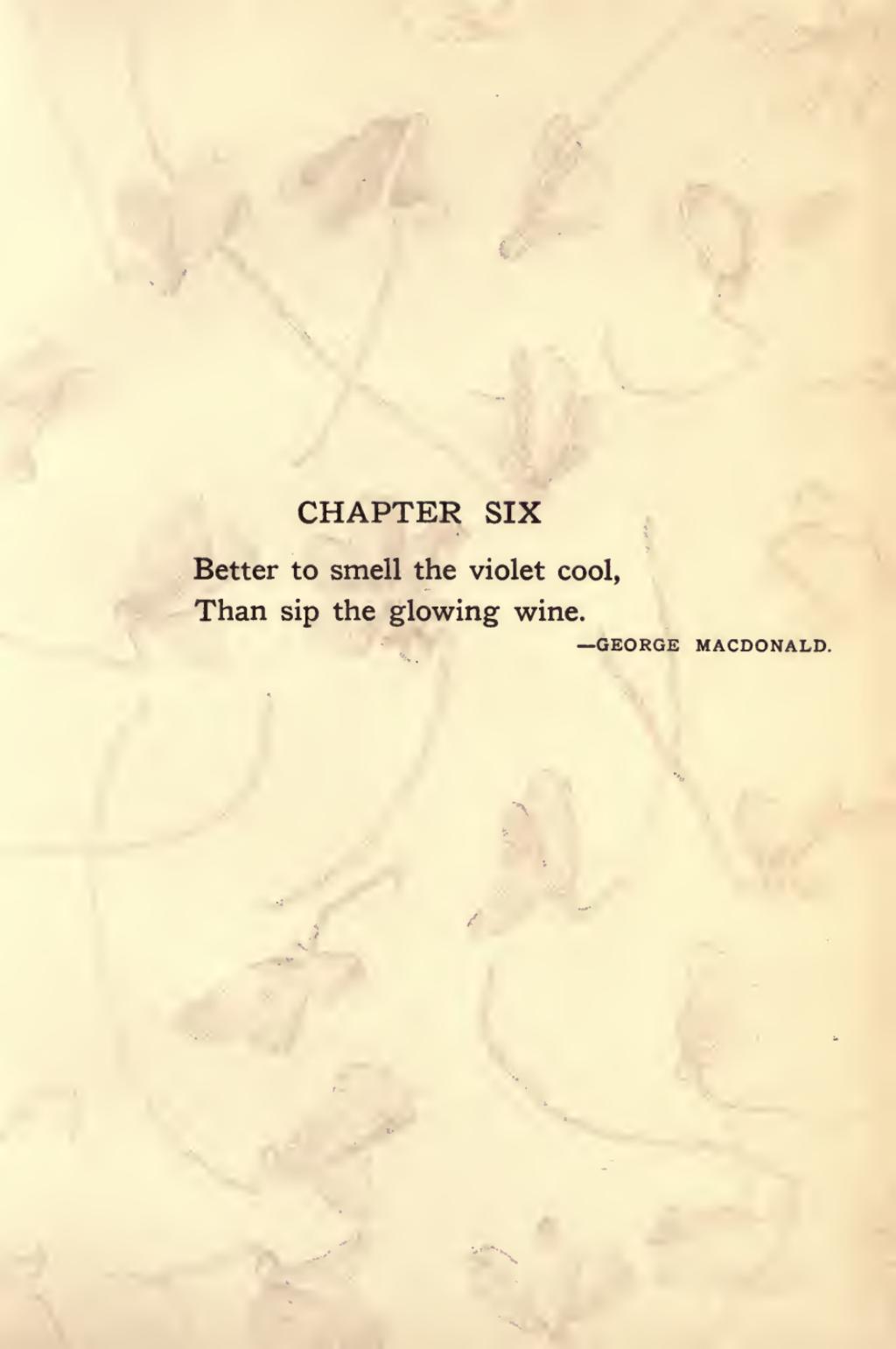
She has virgins many
 Fresh and fair,
 Yet you are
More sweet than any.

Ye are the maiden posies
 And so graced
 To be placed
'Fore damask roses.

—ROBERT HERRICK.

Tute le barche parte via sta note,
E quela del mio ben doman de note;
Tute le barche cargarà de tole,
E quela del mio ben de rose e viole.

—VENETIAN SONG.



CHAPTER SIX

Better to smell the violet cool,
Than sip the glowing wine.

—GEORGE MACDONALD.



CHAPTER SIX

Wooed by the June day's fervent breath,
Violets opened their violet eyes.

—LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

The wind, that poet of the elements,
Tonight comes whistling down our tropic lanes,
And wakes the slumbrous hours with sweet refrains.

Before the pilgrim minstrel violets place
The purple censers of their fervent youth.

—MARY ASHLEY TOWNSEND.

Now in snowdrops pure and pale
Breaks the sere grass; the violet rends her veil.

—HENRY G. HEWLETT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The violet's charms I prize, indeed,
So modest 'tis, and fair.

—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

Seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
Where scattered wild the lily of the vale
Its balmy essence breathes; where cowslips hang
The dewy head, where purple violets lurk
With all the lowly children of the shade.

—JAMES THOMSON.

So then the world's repeating its old story?
Once more, thank God, its fairest page we turn!
The violets and mayflowers, like the glory
Of gold and color in old missals, burn
With fadeless shimmering;
These are its headings and vignettes. The heart
Beats quicker when the Book of Life apart
Falls at the page of Spring!

—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Currents of fragrance, from the orange-tree,
And sward of violets, breathing to and fro,
Mingle, and wandering out upon the sea,
Refresh the idle boatman where they blow.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Close by the roots of moss-grown stumps,
The sweetest and the first to blow,
The blue-eyed violets, in clumps,
Kiss one another as they grow.

—ANONYMOUS.

The purple heath and golden broom
On moory mountains catch the gale,
O'er lawns the lily sheds perfume,
The violet in the vale.

—JAMES MONTGOMERY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

She who sung so gently to the lute
Her dream of home, steals timidly away,
Shrinking as violets do in summer's ray.

—THOMAS MOORE.

Lead me where amid the tranquil vale
The broken streamlet flows in silver light;
And I will linger when the gale
O'er the bank of violets sighs,
Listening to hear its softened sounds arise.

—ROBERT SOUTHEY.

In lower pools that see
All their marges clothed all around
With the innumerable lily;
Whence the golden-girdled bee
Flits through flowering rush to fret
White or duskier violet.

—ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Blue violets, blithe violets,
Who that is human e'er forgets
Your brightness and your blithesomeness,
Your innocent meek tenderness,
That e'er hath stood in budding wood
And seen you at his feet,
Like rarest elves that deck themselves
In fairyhood complete,
Though blue as mist the sun has kissed
In valleys wild and sweet?

—EMILY S. OKEY.

Violets, sweet tenants of the shade,
In purple's richest pride arrayed,
Your errand here fulfil;
Go bid the artist's simple stain
Your lustre imitate in vain,
And match your Master's skill.

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

They are the nation of the bees,
Born from the breath of flowers.
Low in the violet's breast of blue
For treasured food they sink;
They know the flowers that hold the dew
For their small race to drink.

—ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

Sweet-brier, leaning on the crag
That the lady-fern hides under;
Harebells, violets white and blue:
Who has sweeter flowers, I wonder?

—LUCY LARCOM.

Violet, delicate, sweet,
Down in the deep of the wood,
Hid in thy still retreat,
Far from the sound of the street,
Man and his merciless mood.

—COSMO MONKHOUSE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows.

—WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Under foot the violet,
Crocus and hyacinth, with rich inlay,
Broidered the ground.

—JOHN MILTON.

In my veins a music as of boughs
When the cool aspen-fingers of the rain
Feel for the eyelids of the earth in spring.
In every vein quick life; within my soul
The meekness of some sweet eternity
Forgot; and in my eyes soft violet-thoughts
That widen'd in the eye-ball to the light,
And peep'd, and trembled chilly back to the soul
Like leaves of violets closing.

—ROBERT BUCHANAN.

THE VIOLET BOOK

A little child with wondering, wide blue eyes
Shining with ecstasy, yet dimmed with tears,
As though a sudden joy strove with her fears
Only half conquered, while a sweet surprise
Like the first radiant glow of dawning skies
In the uplifted, wistful face appears;
Her tiny foot advanced, as one who nears
The gates of some long-wished-for Paradise,—
With parted lips the timid maiden stands
Clothed in her childish robe of spotless white;
Close to her bosom, in her little hands,
Clasping a knot of violets, all bright
With morning dew, and shyly whispering
In tones of bird and streamlet: "I am Spring!"

—WILLIS BOYD ALLEN.

Now boys and laughing girls pluck violets
And all the dainty wildflowers of the field.

—OVID.

THE VIOLET BOOK

She is so noble, firm and true,
I drink truth from her eyes,
As violets gain the heavens' own blue
In gazing at the skies.

—JOHN HAY.

The violet in her greenwood bower
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

The lone violet which for love's own sake
Its life exhales in pure unconscious good,
Some sunless glen a glowing shrine to make,
With urn of incense in the solitude.

—FRANCES L. MACE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The wild rose sends a honeyed breath
To woo the bee from neighboring wold;
The violet holds its dainty cup
To catch the morning's earliest gold.

—W. M. L. JAY.

Her passions the shy violet
From Hafiz never hides.
Love-longings of the raptured bird
The bird to him confides.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

They knew me not,—blue flower, blue eyes;
She, careless, passed me when we met;
The tender glance which I would prize
Above all things, the violet
Received, and I went on my way,
Companioned with the cheerless day.

—HARRISON ROBERTSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Like some immortal heathen thing,
All fresh with bloom, with odor sweet,
With brook and bird and breeze in tune,
The beautiful bright earth of June
Moves to the fullness of her noon,
While serving sunbeams round her fling
The purple violets as they fleet.

—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

Run, little rivulet, run!
Sing of the flowers, every one,—
Of the delicate harebell and violet blue;
Of the red mountain rosebud, all dripping with dew.

—LUCY LARCOM.

Safe from the storm and the heat,
Breathing of beauty and good,
Fragrantly, under thy hood,

Violet!

—COSMO MONKHOUSE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

O violets, blue-eyed violets!
Scented with sweetest breath,
You seem, as I stoop to pluck you,
To whisper, "There is no death."

—CAROLINE A. SOULE.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A shadowy nook, where half afraid
Of their own loveliness, some violets lie.

—OSCAR WILDE.



CHAPTER SEVEN

Soft-throated South, breathing of summer's ease,
Sweet breath, whereof the violet's life is made!

—GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

I heard the laughter of a brook,
A tiny brook, that babbled through
The fields and told the tales it took
Of bird and reed and water-thing;
And stooping low I saw a gleam
Of violets that nodded to
Their gay reflection in the stream.

—MARY F. FAXON.

More shy than the shy violet
Hiding when the wind doth pass.

—ELLEN M. CORTISSOZ.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The ferns bend low, the grasses lean,
As doing homage to a queen,
The fairest queens that ever smiled
On cavalier, or king beguiled:
Oh, sweet and tender violets!

—M. D. TOLMAN.

I go to the river there below
Where in bunches the violets grow,
And sun and shadow meet.

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Beneath
Peep the blue violets out of black loam.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

The violet varies from the lily as far
As oak from elm.

—ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Lover of each gracious thing
Which makes glad the summer-tide,
From the daisies clustering
And the violets, purple-eyed,
To those shy and hidden blooms
Which in forest coverts stay.

—ANONYMOUS.

I thread the rustling ranks, that hide
Their misty violet treasure.

—BAYARD TAYLOR.

But when the green world buds to blossoming,
Keep violets for the spring, and love for youth,
Love that should dwell with beauty, mirth and hope:
Or if a later, sadder love be born,
Let this not look for grace beyond its scope,
But give itself.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE VIOLET BOOK

And now, when summer south-winds blow
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Sisters, ere the moon is set,
Twine the white, white violet,
While the dews are on it yet,
With the myriad-starrèd mignonette.

—FORCEY THE WILSON.

Voluptuous bloom and fragrance rare
The summer to its rose may bring;
Far sweeter to the wooing air
The hidden violet of the spring.

—BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE VIOLET BOOK

And near the snow-drop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

—HENRY TIMROD.

Pale marguerites, that swayed with dainty grace
To every breeze, the violet's sweet, shy face,
And heart'sease, wonder-eyed.

—J. TORREY CAPEN.

Oh, those gardens dear and far,
Where the wild wind-fairies are!
Though we see not, we can hearken
To them when the spring skies darken,
Singing clearly, singing purely,
Songs of far-off Elfland surely,
And they pluck the wild wind posies,
Lilies, violets and roses.

—PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Miss Violet displays no hood,
Nor garbs herself as violets should—
She sports a witching hat;
Nor is she found in dim retreat,
But often on the crowded street
Her boots go pit-a-pat.

—SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

And give my simple thought the skill to know
What interchanging hints between us pass;
What sense of joy it is that thrills me so
Whene'er I see blue violets in the grass.

—ISAAC B. CHOATE.

Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale, and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

It trembled off the keys,—a parting kiss
So sweet,—the angel slept upon his sword
As through the gate of Paradise we swept,—
Partakers of creation's primal bliss!

—The air was heavy with the breath
 Of violets and love till death—
Forgetful of eternal banishment,
Deep down the dusk of passion-haunted ways,
Lost in the dreaming alchemies of tone,
Drenched in the dew no other wings frequent,
—Our thirsting hearts drank in the breath
 Of violets and love in death—
There was no world, no flesh, no boundary line—
Spirit to spirit—chord and dissonance,
Beyond the jealousy of space or time
His life in one low cry broke over mine!

—The waking angel drew a shuddering breath
 Of violets and love and death.

—MARTHA GILBERT DICKINSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Bay leaves between
And primroses green
Embellish the sweet violet.

—EDMUND SPENSER.

Better to smell the violet cool
Than sip the glowing wine;
Better to hark a hidden brook
Than watch a diamond shine.

—GEORGE MACDONALD.

Upon the water's velvet edge
The purple blossoms breathe delight,
Close nestled to the grassy sedge
As sweet as dawn, as dark as night.
O brook and branches, far away,
My heart keeps time with you today!
“The violets—the violets!”

—FRANCES L. MACE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Call the crowfoot and the crocus,
Call the pale anemone,
Call the violet and the daisy,
Clothed with careful modesty.

—PHŒBE CARY.

The mosses are wet
Under chestnut and thorn
With blossoms new-born
Of dim violet.

—JOHN A. SYMONDS.

Give me only a bud from the trees
Or a blade of grass in morning dew,
Or a cloudy violet clearing to blue,
I could look on it forever.

—SYDNEY DOBELL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

How could I forget
To beg of thee, dear violet!
Some of thy modesty,
That blossoms here as well, unseen,
As if before the world thou'dst been,
O give to strengthen me.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

When daisies pied, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight.

—WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

An emerald robe o'er all the fields is drawn;
Here are cowslips, there the violets appear;
The rill's low laughter, children's joyous words,
The ploughman's chorus, with the song of birds,
In mingled cadences, are heard afar and near.

—JOSIAH RICE TAYLOR.

THE VIOLET BOOK

All the world is blooming, wherefore sigh?
Violets amid the grasses lie,
And the wild bees with their girdles bright
Climb up dazzling shafts of dazzling light;
And on cowslips fall, in golden play,
Shadows of the swallows on their way.

—MRS. WHITON-STONE.

One loves a baby face, with violets there,
Violets instead of laurel in the hair,
As these were all the little locks could bear.

—ROBERT BROWNING.

The sea is growing summer blue,
But fairer, sweeter than the smiling sky,
Or bashful violet with tender eye,
Is she whose love for me will never die,—
I love you, darling, only you!

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

THE VIOLET BOOK

“Use! Use! Use!”

I cried impatiently;—“nothing but use!
As if God never made a violet,
Or hung a harebell!”

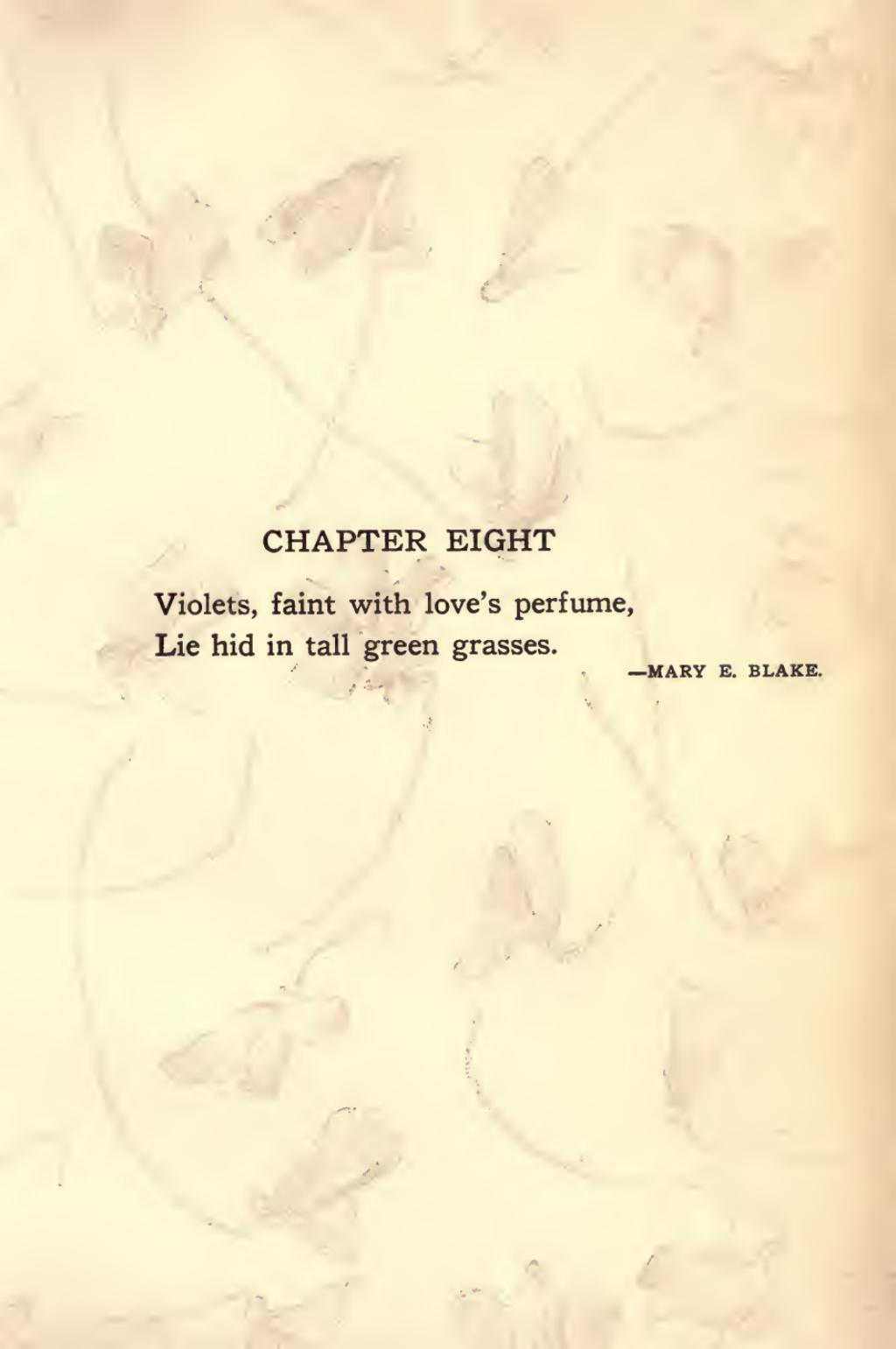
—J. G. HOLLAND.

The pride of every grove I chose,
The violet sweet and lily fair,
The dappled pink and blushing rose,
To deck my charming Chloe’s hair.

—MATTHEW PRIOR.

’Twas a child
In whose large eyes of blue there shone, indeed,
Something to waken wonder. Never sky
In noontide depth, or softly breaking dawn—
Never the dew in new-born violet’s cup,
Lay so entranced in purity.

—NATHANIEL P. WILLIS.



CHAPTER EIGHT

Violets, faint with love's perfume,
Lie hid in tall green grasses.

—MARY E. BLAKE.



CHAPTER EIGHT

The violet, she is faint with heat—
The lily is all forlorn;
My love, arise, with thy dewy eyes,
Arise, and be their morn!

—ALICE CARY.

Grow greener, grass, where the river flows—
Her feet have pressed you;
Blow fresher, violet! lily! rose!
Her eyes have blessed you.

—CHARLES MACKAY.

Violets make the airs that pass
Telltale of their fragrant slope.

—BAYARD TAYLOR.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Sich a rainy season
A-comin' by-an'-by;
But Sun will play de hide-an'-seek
Yander in the sky.

Lily'll look so lonesome—
Violet hide his eye;
But de skies will do yo' weepin',
So, honey, don't you cry!

W'en der rain is over,
Violet dress in blue;
Red rose say: "I sweet terday—
An' here's a kiss fer you!"

—FRANK L. STANTON.

Shadows, like the violets tangled,
Like the soft light, softly mingled.

—ALICE CARY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

When violets pranked the turf with blue,
And morning filled their cups with dew.

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Came one by one the seasons, meetly drest.

First Spring—upon whose head a wreath was set
Of wind-flowers and the yellow violet—
Advanced. Then Summer led his loveliest
Of months, one ever to the minstrel dear
(Her sweet eyes dewy wet),
June, and her sisters, whose brown hands entwine
The brier-rose and the bee-haunted columbine.

—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

Oh, not more sweet the tears
Of the dewy eve on the violet shed,
Than the dews of age on the hoary head
When it enters the eve of years.

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

'Twas violet time when he and she
Went roaming the meadows wide and free.
A happy lad and lass were they,
Their hearts, their hopes, their voices gay,—
She seventeen, he twenty-three.

The skies were calm as a sleeping sea,
And the hills and streams and the mossy lea
A part of the wooing seemed to be;
'Twas violet time.

Years fled, and weak and old grew he;
His form was bent like a snow-bowed tree,
His hair was white and hers was gray,
But their souls were young as a morn in May,
And in their souls—sweet mystery!—

'Twas violet time!

—ERNEST WARBURTON SHURTLEFF.

THE VIOLET BOOK

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye—
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky,
She lived.

—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet;
The old trees o'er it lean.

—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

The brown pine-needles at our feet
Spread forth until the green is met,
To mingle all their perfume sweet
With trillium and with violet.

—WILLIAM McLELLAN.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Ungarlanded still stand the fair
White ladyes of the wood;
Yet, purple-robed, the violet
Peeps from her gray-green hood.

—ANONYMOUS.

Passing along through the field of wheat
By the hedge where in spring the violets glow,
And the bluebells blossom around our feet.

—CHARLES SAYLE.

Lady violet, blooming meekly
By the brooklet free,
Bending low thy gentle forehead
All his grace to see;
Turn thee from the wooing water—
Whisper soft, I pray,
For the wind might hear my secret—
Does he love me? Say!

—N. C. KETCHUM.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Violets in the hazel copse,
Bluebells in the dingle;
Birds in all the green tree-tops
Joyous songs commingle.

—MARY C. GILLINGTON.

In her face a garden lies:
Violets are her azure eyes;
Just below them there repose
Blushing cheeks of velvet rose;
'Twixt the roses, scorning drouth,
Tulips of her tempting mouth.
In this garden alley may
Only one, the chosen, stray.
Reveling in their radiant hues,
Tasting of their precious dews,
Rich delights he ne'er forgets—
Tulips, roses, violets.

—GEORGE BIRDSEYE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

From over-sea,
Violets, for memories,
I send to thee.

—WILLIAM SHARP.

For thoughts of a sylvan home,
For forest trees gemmed with dew,
For sake of the Giver kind,
Violets, I love you.

—GRACE HIBBARD.

I sometimes dream that when at last
My life is done with fading things,
Again will blossom forth the past
To which my memory fondest clings.
That some fair star has kept for me
Fresh blooming still by brook and tree
The violets—the violets!

—FRANCES L. MACE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

When woods in early green were dressed,
And from the chambers of the west
The warmer breezes, traveling out,
Breathed the new scent of flowers about,
My truant steps from home would stray,
Upon its grassy side to play,
List the brown thrasher's vernal hymn,
And crop the violet on its brim.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

In shadows cool and dim
I rest at ease from care and cark,
With pinks and violets to mark
My small horizon's rim.

—SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

A shadowy nook, where half afraid
Of their own loveliness, some violets lie
That will not look the gold sun in the face.

—OSCAR WILDE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

How sweet to rest, ere dawns the summer's heat,
Where violets gaze upward to the sky!

—GUNNISON.

Little streams have flowers a-many,
Beautiful and fair as any,—
Arrowhead with eye of jet,
And the water-violet.

—MARY HOWITT.

Soft-breathed winds, under yon gracious moon,
Doing mild errands for mild violets.

—SIDNEY LANIER.

The violets that skirt the bank
Bend down to thank
The laughing stream with kisses sweet.

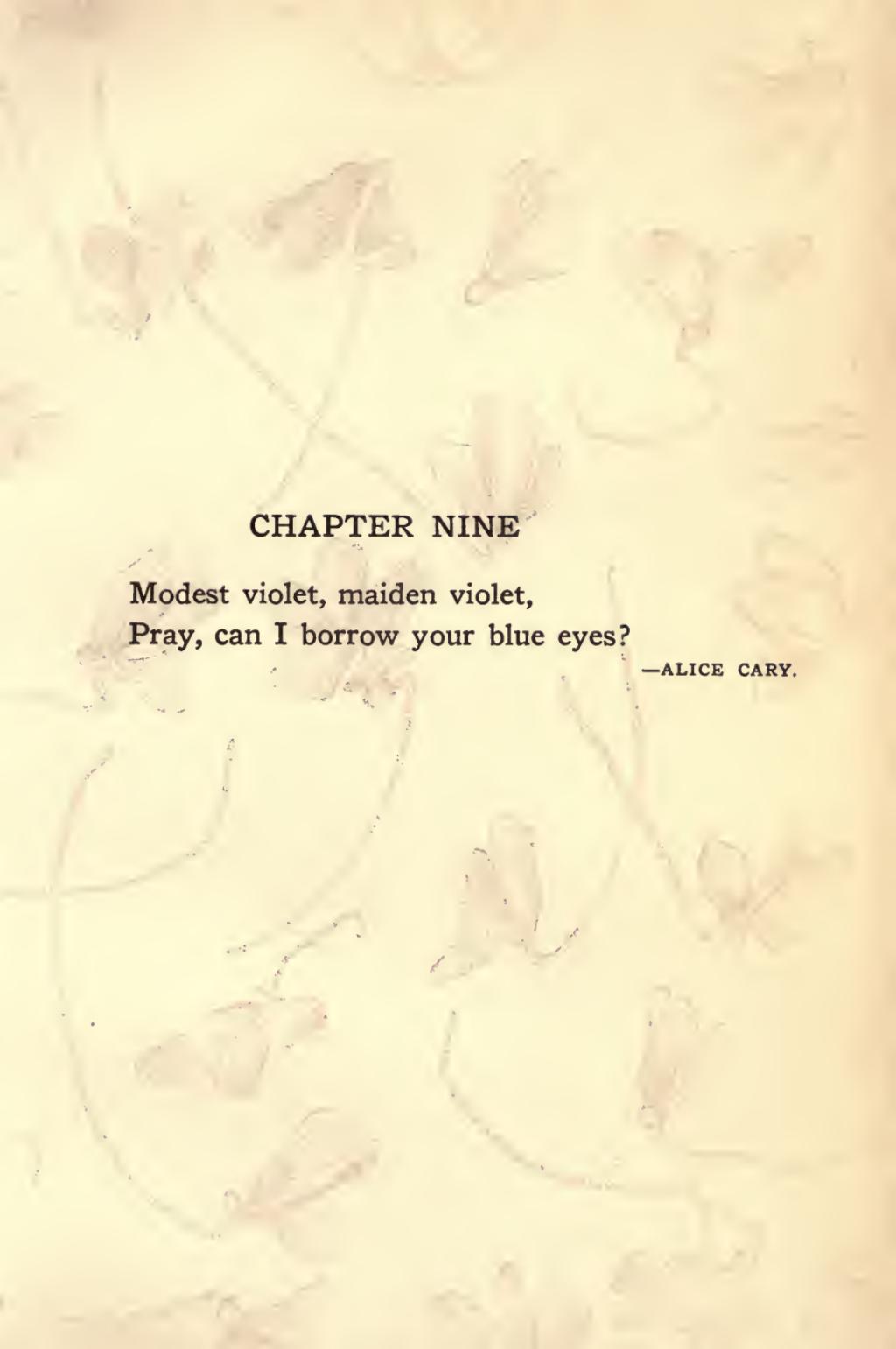
—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Poised in a sheeny mist
Of the dust of bloom,
Clasped to the poppy's breast and kissed,
Baptized in violet perfume
From foot to plume!

—JAMES MAURICE THOMPSON.





CHAPTER NINE

Modest violet, maiden violet,
Pray, can I borrow your blue eyes?

—ALICE CARY.



CHAPTER NINE

These fall-time violets seem
Like a dream within a dream.

—ANONYMOUS.

O that I were listening under the olives!
So should I hear behind in the woodland
The peasants talking. Either a woman,
A wrinkled grandame, stands in the sunshine,
Stirs the brown soil in an acre of violets—
Large odorous violets—and answers slowly
A child's swift babble; or else at noon
The laborers come.

—MARGARET L. WOODS.

The violets meet and disport themselves,
Under the trees, by tens and twelves.

—D. CHAUNCEY BREWER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Shall I tell you what wonderful fancy
Built up this palace for me?
It was only a little white violet
I found at the root of a tree.

—ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

From the field by the river's brink,
Where violets hid his nest,
Soars high with a canticle of the blest
The jubilant bobolink.

—FRANCES L. MACE.

Open wide the windows—
The green hills are in sight,
Winds are whispering, “Violets!”
And—there's a daisy white,
And the great sun says, “Good morning!”
And the valleys sing delight.

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Violets, faint with love's perfume,
Lie hid in tall green grasses.

—MARY E. BLAKE.

The woodbine I will pu' when the e'enning star is near,
And the diamond drops o' dew shall be her een sae clear,
The violets for modesty which weel she fa's to wear.

—ROBERT BURNS.

The bright-eyed daisy, the violet sweet,
The blushing poppy that nods and trembles
In its scarlet hood among the wheat.

—WILLIAM W. STORY.

In meadows bright with violets
And Spring's fair children of the sun.

—TRIPP.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Why do you shiver so,
Violet sweet?
Soft is the meadow-grass
Under my feet.
Wrapped in your hood of green,
Violet, why?
Peep from your earth-door
So silent and shy?

—LUCY LARCOM.

O day of days! Thy memory
Will never fade, nor pass;
Patches of lowly violets
Were clouding all the grass.

—ALICE CARY.

Go, modest little violets, and lie upon her breast;
Your eyes will tell her something—perhaps she'll guess
the rest!

—CHARLES HENRY WEBB.

THE VIOLET BOOK

How gentle is the soul that looketh out
From violets sweet through dim, blue, tearful eyes,
That turns a pleading face to look about
And watch the sun's course through the smiling skies!

—ISAAC BASSETT CHOATE.

Who beheld it? O, the rare surprise
When, like souls upspringing from the sod,
Violets unclosed their still blue eyes
In the green fair world of God!

—EMILY S. OKEY.

Kiss mine eyelids, beauteous Morn,
Blushing into life new-born!
Lend me violets for my hair,
And thy russet robe to wear!

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The south wind is like a gentle friend
Parting the hair so softly on my brow.
I know it has been trifling with the rose
And stooping to the violet.

—NATHANIEL P. WILLIS.

The flowers we know, they move us so,
Almost to weep we're fain;
Who heard us say, that fairest day
Last spring, "They're come again,
Sweet violets"?

—EMILY S. OKEY.

I can hear these violets' chorus
To the sky's benediction above;
And we all together are lying
On the bosom of Infinite Love.

—WILLIAM C. GANNETT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The modest, lowly violet
In leaves of tender green is set,
So rich she cannot hide from view,
But covers all the bank with blue.

—DORA READ GOODALE.

Here blows the warm red clover,
There peeps the violet blue;
O happy little children!
God made them all for you.

—CELIA THAXTER.

I pressed them to my lips for you,
Ah me! I know your heart forgets
In knowing not, or caring that
I pick thee violets.

—MARY FREDERICK FAXON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

When eve had come, and thicker grew
The shadows all the garden through,
Beside the rose-embowered gate,
Her laughter stilled. To speak, or wait—
Oh, beating heart, what should I do!
Long lashes hid her eyes of blue,
Twin violets befringed with dew.

—SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.

I wonder if the violet felt
Your presence when you gently knelt,
And breathed for you its sweetest air
Because you loved yet left it there.

—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

O, were I yon violet,
On which she is walking!
Or were I yon small bird,
To which she is talking!

—ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I asked a nodding violet, why
It sadly hung its head.
It told me Cynthia late past by,
Too soon from it that fled.

—MICHAEL DRAYTON.

Compassed all about with roses sweet
And dainty violets from head to feet.

—EDMUND SPENSER.

Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow calls no time that's gone:
Violets plucked, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again.

—SAMUEL FLETCHER.

On beds of violets blue
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew.

—JOHN MILTON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Over the river there lieth
A city wondrous fair,
And never the eye of a mortal
Hath looked on the glories there.
The lilies grow by the rivers,
Stately and fair they blow,
And lift their balm to the angels,
In their censer-cup of snow;
And the violets blossom forever
In the haunts where the wild birds sing,
And the fern and the flowers are fragrant
In the balm of eternal spring.

—EBEN E. REXFORD.

CHAPTER TEN

The violets bloom is loveliest,
Oh pretty pets, the violets.

—M. D. TOLMAN.



CHAPTER TEN

Ah, the days may be sullen and sober,
The nights may be stormy and cold;
But for him who has eyes to behold,
The violets bloom in October.

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

The soft warm haze
Makes moist once more the sere and dusty ways,
And, creeping through where dead leaves lie in drifts,
The violet returns.

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odor with the violet.

—JOHN KEATS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I think I love the violets best of all,
Because of that hushed sweetness, far and faint
As star-dust through the darkness dimly sown.

—MYRTLE REED.

Oh, North, or South, or East, or West,
The violet's bloom is loveliest!
They come from out their coverts green,
The daintiest damsels ever seen,
Oh, pretty pets, the violets!

—M. D. TOLMAN.

To gild refinèd gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
Is wasteful, and ridiculous excess.

—WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The sun pierced through
And made a rainbow of the mist,
And high, so high against the blue,
I saw a mountain capped in snow;
And in my hand were violets.

—MARY F. FAXON.

Where fields of goldenrod cannot offset
One meadow with a single violet.

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

If ever thou 'rt left alone,
Think not that thy love is dead,
But look till thou find'st the red
Wild rose, and say, "Tis her cheek."
Then kiss it close; and seek—
Where the clear dew never dries—
Blue violets for mine eyes.

—CHARLES HENRY LÜDERS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Trust not, ye modest violets,
His promises to you,
Nor dare upon his fickle smile
To broaden your kerchiefs blue.

—ALICE CARY.

Because you mirror the skies
In color of heaven's own blue—
For your sweet and dainty selves,
Violets, I love you.

—GRACE HIBBARD.

When violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple drest,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

My chill-veined snow-drops,—choicer yet
My white or azure violet.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

There came a softness in the air
And with a throb of longing, ere I knew
A hint of violets, a thought of you
For whom it was, my heart breathed up a prayer.

—CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE.

The primrose turned a babbling flower
Within its sweet recess;
I blushed to see its secret bower,
And turned her name to bless.
The violets said the eyes were blue,
I loved, and did they tell me true?

—JOHN CLARE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I know, I know where violets blow
Upon a sweet hillside,
And very bashfully they grow
And in the grasses hide—
It is the fairest field, I trow,
In the whole world wide.

—ROBERT LOUIS MUNGER.

O, for the life of a gipsy!
A strong-armed, barefoot girl;
And to have the wind for a waiting-maid
To keep my hair in curl;
To bring me scent of the violet,
And the red rose and the pine;
And at night to spread my grassy bed—
Ah! wouldn't it be divine?

—ALICE CARY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The lillie will not long endure,
Nor the snow continue pure:
The rose, the violet,—one day
See! both these lady-flowers decay:
You must fade as well as they.

—ROBERT HERRICK.

Once thy lip, to touch it only,
To my soul has sent a thrill
Sweeter than the violet lonely
Plucked in March-time by the rill.

—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE.

Blow, violets, blow!
And tell him, in your blossoming o'er and o'er,
How in the places which he used to know
His name is still breathed fondly as of yore.

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

THE VIOLET BOOK

See hyacinths and violets dim and sweet,
And orange-blossoms on their dark green stems.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

The snow-drop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odors, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

When love in the faint heart trembles,
And the eyes with tears are wet,
O, tell me what resembles
Thee, young Regret?
Violets with dewdrops drooping,
Lilies o'erfull of gold,
Roses in June rains stooping,
That weep for the cold,
Are like thee, young Regret.

—GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Over the hilltop and down in the meadow-grass
Heaven, like dew, on the waking earth lies;
Part of it, dear, is the blue of these violets—
Best of it all I find in your eyes.

—WILLIS BOYD ALLEN.

Far back where the April violets grew
There smiled, amid crystals of deathless dew,
Our first and last Arcadia.

In clear, unbroken melody
The brook sings and the birds reply:
“The violets—the violets!”

—FRANCES L. MACE.

No more shall violets linger in the dell,
Or purple orchis variegate the plain,
Till Spring again shall call forth every bell,
And dress with hurried hands her wreaths again.

—CHARLOTTE SMITH.

THE VIOLET BOOK

When October dons her crown,
And the leaves are turning brown,—
Breathe, sweet children, soft regrets
For the vanished violets.

—ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Primrose and cowslip have I gathered here,
Anemone and hiding violet,

When April sang the spring song of the year.

Now all is changed; the autumn day is wet
With clouds blown from the west, and vapors fold
Over the dripping woods and vacant wold.

—CHARLES DENYS CONWAY.

She gave me a flower that she wore in her bosom,
And violets, not half so blue as her eyes.

—EMILY S. OKEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Poor little Violet, calling through the chill
Of this new frost which did her sister slay,
In which she must herself, too, pass away!
Nay, pretty Violet, be not so dismayed;
Sleep only on your sisters sweet is laid.

—PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

As I was gathering violets in the snow,
Methought how often, when the heart is low,
And Nature grieves,
The buds of simple faith will meekly blow
'Neath frosted leaves.

—A. E. HAMILTON.

Now cometh Winter, soft snow-wraps to bring,
To keep her baby violets warm till spring.

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Very dark the autumn sky,
Dark the clouds that hurried by;
Very rough the autumn breeze
Shouting rudely to the trees.

Listening, frightened, pale and cold,
Through the withered leaves and mould
Peered a violet all in dread—
“Where, oh, where is spring?” she said.

Sighed the trees, “Poor little thing!
She may call in vain for spring!”
And the grasses whispered low,
“We must never let her know.”

“What’s this whispering?” roared the breeze;
“Hush! a violet,” sobbed the trees,
“Thinks it’s spring—poor child, we fear
She will die if she should hear!”

THE VIOLET BOOK

Softly stole the wind away,
Tenderly he murmured, "Stay!"
To a late thrush on the wing,
"Stay with her one day and sing!"

Sang the thrush so sweet and clear
That the sun came out to hear,
And, in answer to her song,
Beamed on violet all day long.

—OLIVER HERFORD.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

Violet, little violet,
Brave and true and sweet thou art.

—ANONYMOUS.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

“All nature mourns,” I said; “November wild
Hath torn the fairest pages from her book.”

But suddenly a wild bird overhead
Poured forth a strain so strangely clear and sweet,
It seemed to bring me back the skies of May,
And wake the sleeping violets at my feet.

Then long I pondered o'er the poet's words,
“The loss of beauty is not always loss,”
Till like the voice of love they soothed my pain,
And gave me strength to bear again my cross.

—ALBERT LAIGHTON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

The violet's gone,
The first-born child of the early sun;
With us she is but a winter's flower,
The snow on the hills cannot blast her bower,
And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue
To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

—LORD BYRON.

I picked thee violets
Upon a morn when the white mist
Went trailing down the leas and made
A gauzy scarf to twine and twist
About the feet of the blue hills.

—MARY F. FAXON.

Between her breasts that never yet felt trouble
A bunch of violets full-blown and double
Serenely sleep.

—JOHN KEATS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Sweetest Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell,
By slow Meander's argent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale.

—JOHN MILTON.

Even the tiny violet can make
Her little circle sweet as love.

—GRACE GREENWOOD.

And Helen breathed the scent of violets, blown
Along the bosky shores.

—BAYARD TAYLOR.

There her head the golden lily rears,
The soft-eyed violet sheds her odorous tears.

—NICHOLAS MITCHELL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I used to go and watch them,
Both night and morning, too:—
It was my tears, I fancy,
That kept the violets blue.

—ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

My girl hath violet eyes and yellow hair,
A soft hand, like a lady's, soft and fair,
A sweet face pouting in a white straw bonnet,
A tiny foot, and little boot upon it.

—ROBERT BUCHANAN.

Here the first violets
Perhaps will bud unseen,
And a dove, maybe,
Return to nestle here.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Gold violets, bright violets,
The sparkling dew at sunrise wets,
And doth with nectar overbrim;
Lustre no cloudy day can dim;
The golden sun doth shine upon
And call his children rare;
The yellow-bird hath sometimes stirred
Drawn downward unaware.

—EMILY S. OAKLEY.

Lay her in lilies and in violets.

—EDMUND SPENSER.

The violet's blue,
The rose bloom's red,—and friends are tried and true;
The blossoms on the boughs are white in spring,
The wind is soft, the birds spread joyous wing,
And soar and wheel in the blue sky, and sing,
Because—because I love you.

—FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

THE VIOLET BOOK

In languid luxury soft she glides
Encircled by the azure tides,
Like some fair lily, faint with weeping,
Upon a bed of violets sleeping.

—THOMAS MOORE.

E'en now what affection the violet awakes;
What loved little islands, twice seen in their lakes,
Can the wild water-lily restore!

—THOMAS CAMPBELL.

Then by the enchantress Fancy led,
On violet banks I lay my head.

—JAMES MONTGOMERY.

The air is sweet with violets running wild
'Mid broken friezes and fallen capitals.

—SAMUEL ROGERS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Mistress violet, mistress violet,
I want your tender and true eyes!
For mine are as cold and as black as jet,
And I want your heavenly blue eyes!
Modest violet, maiden violet,
Pray, can I borrow your blue eyes?

—ALICE CARY.

Flowers were the couch,
Pansies and violets, and asphodels,
And hyacinths, earth's freshest, softest lap.

—JOHN MILTON.

Flowers, of such as keep
Their fragrant tissues and their heavenly hues
Fresh-bathed forever in eternal dews—
The violet with her low-drooped eye,
For learned modesty.

—SIDNEY LANIER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Before the urchin well could go,
She stole the whiteness of the snow;
And more—the whiteness to adorn,
She stole the blushes of the morn:
Stole all the sweets that ether sheds
On primrose buds or violet beds.
If lovers, Cupid, are thy care,
Exert thy vengeance on this fair;
To trial bring her stolen charms,
And let her prison be my arms.

—CHARLES WYNDHAM.

Thine old-world eyes—each one a violet—
Big as the baby rose that is thy mouth—
Sets me a-dreaming. Have our eyes not met
In childhood—in a garden of the South?

—HENRY A. BEERS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

May his soft foot, where it treads,
Gardens thence produce, and meads,
And those meddowes full be set
With the rose and violet.

—ROBERT HERRICK.

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white,
The violets and the lily-cups—
Those flowers made of light.

—THOMAS HOOD.

The light drop of dew
That glows in the violet's eye,
In the splendor of morn, to the fugitive view,
May rival a star in the sky.

—JAMES MONTGOMERY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

I saw thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue:
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew.

—LORD BYRON.

Oh Stream of Life! the violet springs
But once beside thy bed;
But one brief summer, on thy path,
The dews of heaven are shed.

—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Whate'er the baffling power
Sent anger and earthquake, and a thousand ills—
It made the violet flower,
And the wide world with breathless beauty thrills.

—RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The morning star of all the flowers
The virgin, virgin violet.

—LORD BYRON.

CHAPTER TWELVE

O Winter, thou art warm at heart;
Thine every pulse doth throb and glow,
And thou dost feel life's joy and smart,
Beneath the blinding snow.

Thine is the scent of bursting bud,
Of April shower and violet;
Thou feelest spring in all thy blood
Yearn up like sweet regret.

—JAMES BENJAMIN KENYON.

Bare are the places where the sweet flowers dwelt.
What joy sufficient hath November felt,
What profit from the violets' day of pain?

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Pluck the others, but still remember
Their herald out of dim December—
The morning-star of all the flowers,
The pledge of daylight's lengthened hours;
Nor, midst the roses, e'er forget
The virgin, virgin violet.

—LORD BYRON.

Violet, little violet,
Brave and true and sweet thou art.
May is in thy sunny heart,
Maiden violet.
Gentle as the summer day,
Wintry storms bring no dismay,
Winsome violet.
All the days to thee are spring,
Thine own sunshine dost thou bring,
Violet, faithful violet!

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Only in dreams thy love comes back,
And fills my soul with joy divine.

Only in dreams I feel thy heart
Once more beat close to mine.

Only in blissful dreams of spring,
And sunny banks of violet blue,
The past folds back its curtain dim
And memory shows thine image true.

—MELVILLE M. BIGELOW.

Winter is come again. There is no voice
Of waters with beguiling for your ear,
And the cool forest and the meadows green
Witch not your feet away; and in the dells
There are no violets.

—NATHANIEL P. WILLIS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Once more, dear friend, the violet bank we seek,
And tread with joy our old familiar ways.

—JESSIE CUNNINGHAM HOWDEN.

Cheek o'er cheek, and with red so tender
Rippling bright through the gypsy brown,
Just to see how a lady's splendor
Shone the heads of the daffodils down.
Winds through the violets' misty covering
Now kissed the white ones and now the blue,
Sang the redbreast over them hovering
All as the world were but just made new.

—ALICE CARY.

Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath.

—WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Could you not come when woods are green?
Could you not come when lambs are seen?
When the primrose laughs from its child-like sleep,
And the violets hide and the bluebells peep?

—ALFRED AUSTIN.

Thy face is like the violet's
That to the red rose lingers close,
And he who looks at thee forgets
The honeyed sweetness of the rose.

—JOEL BENTON.

He gave her the wildwood roses
And violets for her wreath,
And a whisper at last of sweet response
Stole on her perfumed breath.

—FRANCES L. MACE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Come not, O sweet days,
Out of yon cloudless blue,
Ghosts of so many dear remembered Mays,
With faces like dead lovers, who died true.
Come not, lest we go seek with eyes all wet,
Primrose and violet,
Forgetting that they lie
Deep in the mould till winter has gone by.

—DINAH MARIA MULOCHE CRAIK.

Blighting and blowing—blighting and blowing—
And the stones of the rivulet silent lie,
And the winds in the fading woodlands cry,
And the birds in the clouds are going;
And the dandelion hides his gold,
And their little blue tents the violets fold,
And the air is gray with snowing:
So life keeps coming and going.

—ALICE CARY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Dear chance it were in some rough wood-god's lair
To sink o'er drowsed, and dream that wild-flowers blew
Around my head and feet silently there,
Till spring's glad choir adown the valley pealed
And violets trembled in the morning dew.

—EDWARD DOWDEN.

The sunbeams kiss askant the sombre hill,
The naked woodbine climbs the window-sill,
The breaths that noon exhales are faint and chill.

Tread lightly where the dainty violets blew,
Where to spring winds their soft eyes open flew;
Safely they sleep the churlish winter through.

Though all life's portals are indiced with woe,
And frozen pearls are all the world can show,
Feel! Nature's breath is warm beneath the snow!

—ANONYMOUS.

THE VIOLET BOOK

You'll look at least on love's remains,
A grave's one violet?
Your look?—that pays a thousand pains.
What's death? You'll love me yet!

—ROBERT BROWNING.

Out of every shadowy nook
Spirit faces seem to look,
Some with smiling eyes, and some
With a sad entreaty dumb;
He who shepherded his sheep
On the wild Sicilian steep,
He above whose grave are set
Sprays of Roman violet;
Poets, sages,—all who wrought
In the crucible of thought.

—CLINTON SCOLLARD.

THE VIOLET BOOK

A fair little girl sat under a tree
Sewing as long as her eyes could see;
Then smoothed her work and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work, good night, good night!"

The tall pink foxglove bowed his head;
The violets curtsied and went to bed;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said, on her knees, her favorite prayer.

—RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES.

My banks they are furnished with bees,
Whose murmur invites one to sleep;
My grottoes are shaded with trees,
And my hills are white over with sheep;
I seldom have met with a loss,
Such health do my fountains bestow;
My fountains all bordered with moss,
Where the harebells and violets grow.

—WILLIAM SHENSTONE.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Where the fern in gladness dances
 On the banks of dimpled burns,
Where the streamlet's bright wave glances
 When the spring returns;
White as winter's spotless drift
 There our faces we uplift.
Still we see the stars above us,
 Still we trust, because they love us—
 Are they flowers in the sky,
 Violets that have learned to fly?
We believe, and hope, and trust,
 Know that He who made is just,
 And He never will forsake us
While we're white and pure of heart.
 Sister, maiden Sister, take us—
 One of us thou art!

—WILLIS BOYD ALLEN.

O violets, sweet blue eyes of the spring!

—DEXTER SMITH.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Here's the violet's modest blue,
That 'neath hawthorns hides from view.
While they choose each lovely spot,
The sun disdains them not;
So I've brought the flowers to plead
And win a smile from thee.

—JOHN CLARE.

Last night I found the violets
You sent me once across the sea;
From gardens that the winter frets,
In summer lands they came to me.

Still fragrant of the English earth,
Still hurried from the frozen dew,
To me they spoke of Christmas mirth,
They spoke of England, spoke of you.

—ANDREW LANG.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Darling, walk with me this morn;
Let your brown tresses drink its sheen;
These violets, within them worn,
Of floral fays shall make you queen.

—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

O faint, delicious, springtime violet!
Thine odor, like a key,
Turns noiselessly in memory's wards to let
A thought of sorrow free.

—WILLIAM W. STORY.

The violet, Spring's little infant, stands
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands;
On the fair tulip thou dost dote,
Thou cloth'st it in a gay and party-colored coat. . .

—ABRAHAM COWLEY.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Under the larch with its tassels wet,
While the early sunbeams lingered yet,
In the rosy dawn my love I met.

Under the larch when the sun was set,
He came with an April violet:
Forty years—and I have it yet.

Out of life with its fond regret,
What have love and memory yet?
Only an April violet.

—ANONYMOUS.

Good-bye to the red rose that is your mouth,
The tender violets that are your sigh;
The sweetness that you are—that is my South—
Ah, not too soon, Enchantress, do I fly!—
Tell me good-bye!

—RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

THE VIOLET BOOK

Through the deep drifts the south wind breathed its way
Down to the earth's green face; the air grew warm,
The snowdrops had regained their lovely charm;
The world had melted round them in a day:
My full heart longed for violets.

—CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER.

The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kissed by the breath of heaven, seems colored by its skies.

—LORD BYRON.

When we were children we would say,—
“I like the coming of the spring,
I like the violets of May,
I like, why, almost everything
That March and May and April bring.”
But now we value less the rose,
And care not when the birds take wing.
We like the winter and the snows.

—JAMES BERRY BENSEL.

THE VIOLET BOOK

So long as there's a sun that sets,
Primroses will have their glory;
Long as there are violets
They will have a place in story.

—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Go, azure myrtle blossom,
Go, violets and jasmine fair,
And star the darkness of her hair,
Or faint against her bosom.

—GRACE GREENWOOD.

Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet.

—JOHN MILTON.

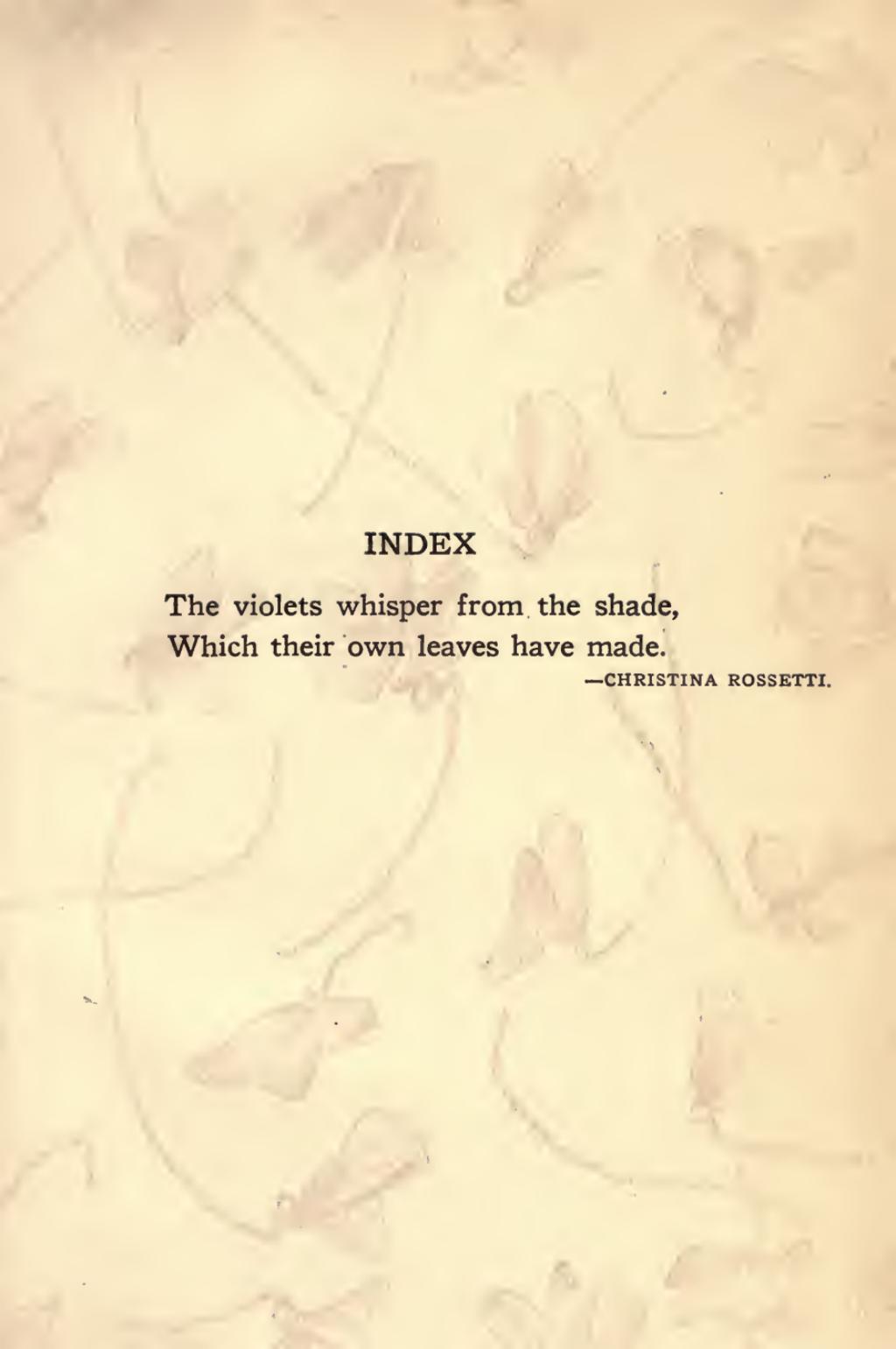
THE VIOLET BOOK

God does not send us strange flowers every year.
When the spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces—
 The violet is here.

It all comes back: the odor, grace and hue;
Each sweet relation of its life repeated:
No blank is left, no looking-for is cheated;
 It is the thing we knew.

So after the death-winter it must be.
God will not put strange signs in the heavenly places:
The old love will look out from the old faces.
 Veilchen! I shall have thee!

—ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY.



INDEX

The violets whisper from the shade,
Which their own leaves have made.

—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.



INDEX TO AUTHORS

| | <i>Page</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ALDRICH, THOMAS BAILEY | 48 |
| ALLEN, ELIZABETH AKERS | 19, 30, 41, 111, 141, 147, 150 |
| ALLEN, WILLIS BOYD | 94, 149, 178 |
| ANONYMOUS | 21, 29, 42, 59, 89, 91, 103, 117, 120, 124, 129, 130, 151, 170, 175, 181 |
| AUSTIN, ALFRED | 173 |
| AUSTIN, JANE | 36 |
| BAKER, ELLA M. | 76 |
| BATES, ARLO | 51 |
| BEERS, HENRY A. | 164 |
| BENSEL, JAMES BERRY | 182 |
| BENTON, JOEL | 173 |
| BIGELOW, MELVILLE M. | 171 |
| BIRDSEYE, GEORGE | 121 |
| BLAKE, HOSEA G. | 20 |
| BLAKE, MARY E. | 131 |
| BOKER, GEORGE HENRY | 66 |
| BOSTWICK, HELEN B. | 16 |
| BOURDILLON, F. W. | 72 |
| BRADLEY, MARY | 23 |
| BRENIZER, JOHN LUTHER | 67 |
| BREWER, D. CHAUNCEY | 27, 63, 74, 129 |
| BROWNING, ROBERT | 111, 176 |
| BROWNING, ELIZABETH BARRETT | 57 |
| BRYANT, JOHN HOWARD | 74 |
| BRYANT, WILLIAM CULLEN | 21, 22, 28, 46, 64, 72, 81, 83, 89, 123, 144, 148, 166 |

INDEX

| | Page |
|---------------------------------|---|
| BUCHANAN, ROBERT | 16, 47, 65, 93, 160 |
| BURNETT, FRANCES HODGSON | 161 |
| BURNS, ROBERT | 131 |
| BYRON, LORD | 72, 158, 166, 170, 182 |
| CAMPBELL, THOMAS | 162 |
| CAPEN, J. TORREY | 105 |
| CAPERN, EDWARD | 59 |
| CAREW, THOMAS | 63, 75 |
| CARY, ALICE | 28, 30, 47, 73, 115, 116, 132, 144, 146, 163, 172, 174 |
| CARY, PHŒBE | 109 |
| CARRYL | 45 |
| CHAUCER, GEOFFREY | 36 |
| CHOATE, ISAAC BASSETT | 31, 106, 133 |
| CLARE, JOHN | 145, 179 |
| COCKE, ZITELLA | 33 |
| CONWAY, CHARLES DENYS | 150 |
| CORTISSOZ, ELLEN M. | 101 |
| COWLEY, ABRAHAM | 180 |
| CRAIK, DINAH MARIA MULOCK | 174 |
| CRANCH, CHRISTOPHER P. | 48, 50 |
| CUNNINGHAM, ALLAN | 136 |
| DE KAY, CHARLES | 49 |
| DICKINSON, EMILY | 18 |
| DICKINSON, MARTHA GILBERT | 107 |
| DOBELL, SYDNEY | 109 |
| DOBSON, AUSTIN | 45 |
| DODGE, MARY MAPES | 52 |
| DOWDEN, EDWARD | 175 |
| DRAYTON, MICHAEL | 137 |
| DUNBAR, PAUL LAURENCE | 58 |

INDEX

| | <i>Page</i> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| EGAN, MAURICE FRANCIS | 44 |
| EMERSON, RALPH WALDO | 32, 34, 51, 52, 77, 96, 102 |
| FAXON, MARY F. | 101, 135, 143, 158 |
| FAY, ANNA MARIA | 35 |
| FERGUSON, ROBERT | 30 |
| FLETCHER, SAMUEL | 43, 137 |
| FÖRSTER, FRIEDRICH | 68 |
| GALLAGHER, WILLIAM D. | 76 |
| GANNETT, WILLIAM C. | 134 |
| GILDER, RICHARD WATSON | 45, 166, 181 |
| GILLINGTON, MARY C. | 121 |
| GOETHE, JOHANN WOLFGANG VON | 79, 88, 147 |
| GOODALE, DORA READ | 78, 135 |
| GOODRICH | 44 |
| GOSSE, EDMUND W. | 22 |
| GREENWOOD, GRACE | 18, 27, 42, 159, 183 |
| GUNNISON | 124 |
| HAMILTON, A. E. | 151 |
| HAWKER, ROBERT STEPHEN | 92 |
| HAY, JOHN | 95 |
| HEINE, HEINRICH | 34, 65 |
| HERFORD, OLIVER | 152 |
| HERRICK, ROBERT | 78, 84, 147, 165 |
| HEWLETT, HENRY G. | 71, 87 |
| HIBBARD, GRACE | 122, 144 |
| HOLLAND, J. G. | 112 |
| HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL | 49, 117, 133 |
| HOMER | 83 |
| HOOD, THOMAS | 165 |
| HOWDEN, JESSIE CUNNINGHAM | 172 |
| HOWITT, MARY | 124 |

INDEX

| | Page |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| JACKSON, HELEN HUNT | 42, 81, 141, 143, 169 |
| JAY, W. M. L. | 96 |
| KEATS, JOHN | 141, 158 |
| KELLEY, ETHEL M. | 31 |
| KENYON, JAMES BENJAMIN | 41, 169 |
| KETCHUM, N. C. | 120 |
| LAIGHTON, ALBERT | 157 |
| LANG, ANDREW | 32, 179 |
| LANIER, SIDNEY | 49, 124, 163 |
| LARCOM, LUCY | 60, 61, 64, 73, 82, 92, 97, 132 |
| LATHROP, GEORGE PARSONS | 101 |
| LAZARUS, EMMA | 51 |
| LEARNED, WALTER | 17 |
| LIDDELL, CHRISTINA CATHARINE | 80 |
| LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH | 102 |
| LONGFELLOW, SAMUEL | 66 |
| LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL | 24, 60, 75, 77, 110 |
| LÜDERS, CHARLES HENRY | 143 |
| MACDONALD, GEORGE | 108 |
| MACE, FRANCES L. | 77, 95, 108, 122, 130, 149, 173 |
| MACKAY, CHARLES | 115 |
| MARSTON, PHILIP BOURKE | 105, 151 |
| MCLELLAN, WILLIAM | 119 |
| MILNES, RICHARD MONCKTON | 177 |
| MILTON, JOHN | 93, 137, 159, 163, 183 |
| MITCHELL, NICHOLAS | 159 |
| MONKHOUSE, COSMO | 29, 92, 97 |
| MONTGOMERY, JAMES | 89, 162, 165 |
| MOORE, THOMAS | 20, 90, 162 |
| MOULTON, LOUISE CHANDLER | 87 |
| MOULTRIE, JOHN | 66 |

INDEX

| | Page |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| MUNGER, ROBERT LOUIS | 146 |
| OKEY, EMILY S. | 21, 45, 63, 79, 91, 133, 134, 150, 161 |
| OVID | 94 |
| PAGE, CURTIS HIDDEN | 145 |
| PATMORE, COVENTRY | 17 |
| PAYNE, JOHN | 15 |
| PECK, SAMUEL MINTURN | 58, 106, 123, 136 |
| PERCIVAL, JAMES G. | 19 |
| PHILLIPS, MILDRED G. | 35 |
| PRIOR, MATTHEW | 112 |
| PROCTOR, ADELAIDE | 31, 74, 130, 160 |
| READ, THOMAS BUCHANAN | 59 |
| REED, MYRTLE | 46, 142 |
| REESE, LIZETTE WOODWORTH | 32 |
| REXFORD, EBEN E. | 138 |
| ROBERTSON, HARRISON | 32, 60, 96 |
| ROGERS, SAMUEL | 34, 162 |
| ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA | 23, 52, 62, 64, 80, 103, 145, 160 |
| SAYLE, CHARLES | 120 |
| SCOLLARD, CLINTON | 78, 176 |
| SCOTT, WALTER, SIR | 95, 106 |
| SHAKSPEARE, WILLIAM | 27, 62, 93, 110, 142, 172 |
| SHARP, WILLIAM | 122 |
| SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE | 53, 148 |
| SHENSTONE, WILLIAM | 177 |
| SHERMAN, FRANK DEMPSTER | 75 |
| SHURTLEFF, ERNEST WARBURTON | 118 |
| SMITH, CHARLOTTE | 149 |
| SMITH, DEXTER | 178 |
| SOULE, CAROLINE A. | 98 |
| SOUTHEY, ROBERT | 73, 90 |

INDEX

| | Page |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| SPENSER, EDMUND | 16, 108, 137, 161 |
| SPOFFORD, HARRIET PRESCOTT | 37, 97, 136 |
| STANTON, FRANK L. | 116 |
| STEDMAN, EDMUND C. | 117, 180 |
| STORY, WILLIAM W. | 131, 180 |
| STRUTHERS, WILLIAM | 58 |
| SWAIN, CHARLES | 175 |
| SWINBURNE, ALGERNON C. | 90 |
| SYMONDS, JOHN A. | 109 |
| TABB, JOHN B. | 67 |
| TAYLOR, BAYARD | 17, 80, 103, 104, 115, 159 |
| TAYLOR, JOSIAH RICE | 110 |
| TENNYSON, ALFRED | 43, 50, 57, 62, 102 |
| TENNYSON-TURNER, CHARLES | 182 |
| THAXTER, CELIA | 29, 46, 71, 135 |
| THOMAS, EDITH M. | 28 |
| THOMPSON, JAMES MAURICE | 125 |
| THOMSON, JAMES | 83, 88 |
| TIMROD, HENRY | 105 |
| TODHUNTER, JOHN | 48 |
| TOLMAN, M. D. | 102, 142 |
| TOWNSEND, MARY ASHLEY | 87 |
| TRIPP | 131 |
| TROWBRIDGE, JOHN T. | 33 |
| VAN DYKE, HENRY | 43, 83 |
| VAUGHAN, HENRY | 20 |
| VIRGIL | 57 |
| WEATHERLY | 35 |
| WEBB, CHARLES HENRY | 132 |
| WELLER, BERNARD | 44 |
| WHITNEY, ADELINE D. T. | 184 |

INDEX

| | Page |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| WHITON-STONE, MRS. | 111 |
| WHITTIER, JOHN GREENLEAF | 22, 71, 104, 119 |
| WILDE, OSCAR | 123 |
| WILLIS, NATHANIEL P. | 112, 134, 171 |
| WILSON, FORCEYTHE | 104 |
| WILTON, RICHARD | 81 |
| WOODBERRY, GEORGE EDWARD | 148 |
| WOODS, MARGARET L. | 129 |
| WOOLSEY, SARAH CHANNING | 61 |
| WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM | 119, 183 |
| WOTTON, HENRY, SIR | 33 |
| WYNDHAM, CHARLES | 164 |









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